Commentary

VOLUME EIGHTY-SIX · NUMBER FIVE · NOVEMBER 1988

Is There Still a Soviet Threat?

Angelo M. Codevilla

Evolution and the Bible

Leon R. Kass

The Psychology of Altruism

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The Train — A Story

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Alger Hiss: A Glimpse Behind the Mask

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An Exchange on Glasnost

Alain Besancon/Vladimir Bukovsky/Jerry Hough/
Walter Laqueur and others

Books in Review: Midge Decter/Michael Lewis/
Stephen Schwartz/ Paul S. Appelbaum/James Nuechterlein

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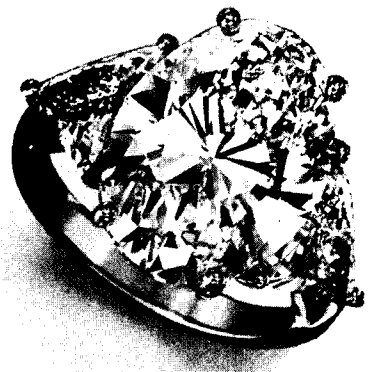

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COMMENTARY (ISSN 0010-2601) is published monthly by the American Jewish Committee—Single copy is $3.50, $36 a year; 2 years $68, 3 years $99—Add $7.00 per year for all foreign, including Canada and Latin America—Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to COMMENTARY, 165 East 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10022.

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EDITORIAL & BUSINESS OFFICES: 165 E. 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10022

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Glasnost

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Walter Laqueur, in "Glasnost & Its Limits" [July], takes issue with some remarks in my own earlier article in COMMENTARY, "Gorbachev Without Illusions" [April]. For the sake of clarification, let me briefly summarize my position.

1. We need to distinguish clearly between Gorbachev's political intentions and the perhaps involuntary consequences of his policies. His intention is to promote a *reform*, which will permit him (a) to consolidate his own power, (b) to consolidate the power of the party, and (c) to consolidate the fortunes of "socialism" (as that word is understood in its Leninist sense). In my judgment, this reform is impossible and has already failed.

2. The miscarriage of Gorbachev's intended reform is aggravating the *crisis* of the Soviet regime. More than one Western commentator seems to have confused some of the diverse effects of that crisis with the intended effects of reform. Since the crisis is weakening the power of the party, such commentators hasten to congratulate Gorbachev on his "liberalism" and conclude that we must help him in his struggle against the "conservatives." But Gorbachev *agrees* with his rivals in the party on the ends being pursued; they differ only on questions of the means and on the scope of the General Secretary's personal power.

3. I described Gorbachev's program as being consistent with Leninist principles. I judged that the domestic-policy aspects of it would fail (while the foreign-policy aspects might succeed) and that the crisis would therefore continue. Concerning the shape, the duration, and the outcome of the crisis, I have no special knowledge and I doubt that anyone does. Insofar as the USSR remains a stable Leninist state, it is the most transparent and predictable country on earth. But once past a certain threshold of crisis it slips away from the artificial regularity imposed by any ideological system and reenters ordinary historical time, wherein it becomes subject to the same unpredictability that besets "natural" states all over the world.

ALAIN BESANÇON
Paris, France

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

It is a pity that in his otherwise interesting and informative article Walter Laqueur presents a somewhat inaccurate account of my views of Gorbachev and his policies. Thus, among other things, Mr. Laqueur writes that "Soon after the General Secretary came to power he was called a Stalinist by the prominent émigré intellectual, Vladimir Bukovsky . . . ," and that my "original thesis was developed in an article in *Obozrenie*."

To begin with, there must be a mistake in his reference: I do not recall ever seeing a publication named *Obozrenie*, let alone writing an article for it. Perhaps Mr. Laqueur means the English magazine *Survey* (which in Russian is "*obozrenie*"), where a speech I gave at a conference of the Committee for the Free World was reprinted (Spring 1985).

What is more important, assuming my guess is correct, is that I did not there call Gorbachev a Stalinist. Commenting on the fit of euphoria that had overtaken many in the West upon Gorbachev's accession, I simply pointed out that nothing in his previous career would indicate that he was in any way different from the so-called "old guard" which had, indeed, brought him up, educated him, and promoted him. I trust that Mr. Laqueur would agree with me that such patrons of Gorbachev as Andropov, Kulakov, and Suslov, and later Ustinov, Gromyko, and so forth, could hardly be described as a "new guard" or "liberals." Clearly, a man who joined the Communist party in 1952, during Stalin's last campaign against Jews and intellectuals; who became a local party boss in 1966, just after Khrushchev was dismissed; who became a member of the Central Committee in 1971, and a member of the Politburo in 1980, could hardly be a compulsive reformer. If nothing else, he must himself have been at least partly responsible for the "stagnation" of the Brezhnev era which he was now criticizing so much, and it was at best ridiculous to call him, as the Western media did back in 1985, "a new face in the Kremlin."

Furthermore, as I tried to explain in that speech, the tendency to portray the internal Soviet situation as a struggle between an old guard

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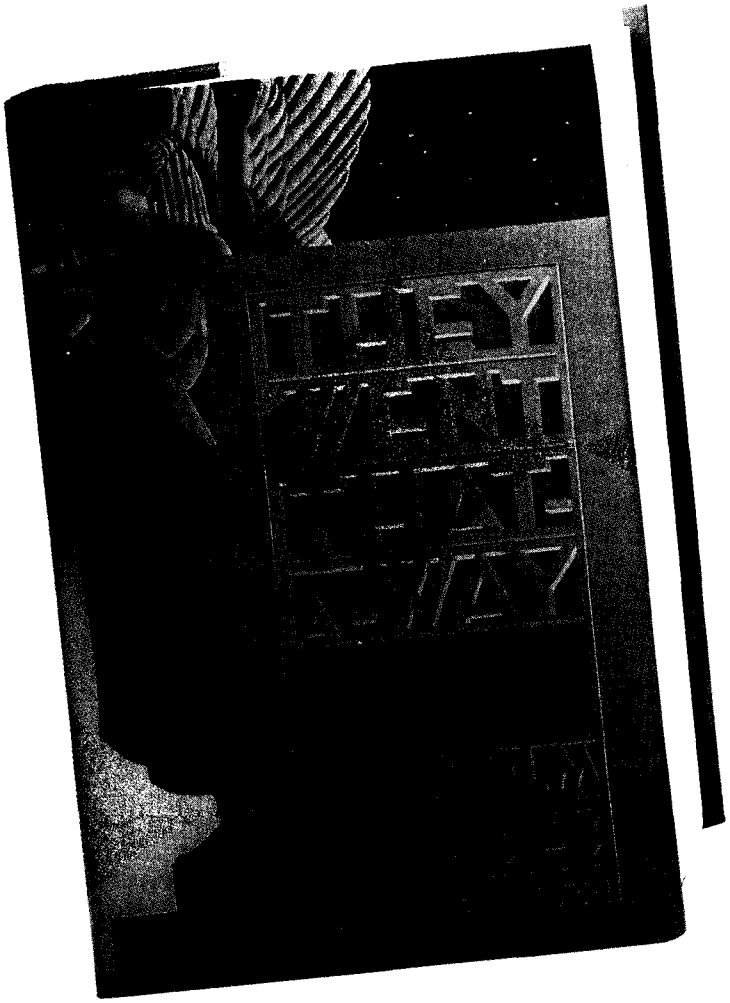

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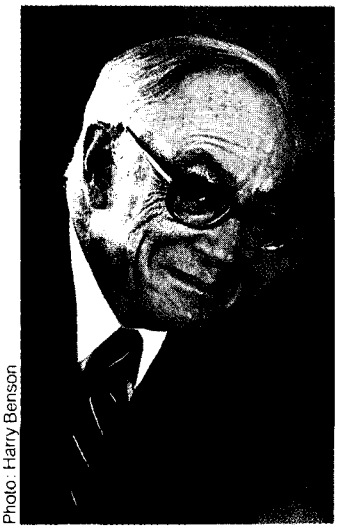

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and a new guard, or between conservatives and reformers, was a simplification based on the "mirror-image" fallacy so common in the West. The reason for such senseless preoccupation with the personalities of Soviet leaders must lie in a failure to understand totalitarian systems. One could like or dislike Gorbachev, but one would have to "do business" (in Margaret Thatcher's unfortunate phrase) not with him but with the whole political system. The General Secretary of the Communist party is not an autonomous individual, he is a function. His personal inclinations are irrelevant, because he is not a czar and the Soviet political system is not an autocracy. Thus, the emergence of a new leader does not automatically signify a new policy. Rather the opposite is true: a decision to change policy brings a change in leadership.

This was certainly true in the case of Gorbachev, whose renowned policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika* were worked out in principle long before he became General Secretary—according to some reports, during the last years of Brezhnev's rule and Andropov's subsequent short term in power (see, for example, Dusko Doder, "Andropov Rushed Renewal into Motion," Washington *Post*, July 28, 1985). Needless to say, this decision was not prompted by anyone's great urge for reform, or by a concern for the well-being of the Russian people, but by the catastrophic decline in the economy which was undermining the status of the Soviet Union as a superpower.

There is no need to ascribe this interpretation to me, as Mr. Laqueur does in his article. The fear of lagging behind South Korea, to say nothing of the United States, is a constant theme in the Soviet press. The fear of being unable to maintain superpower status, of allowing the "position of socialism in the modern world" to suffer, has also been a constant theme of Gorbachev's speeches starting with his maiden speech in 1985, and a justification for introducing radical change. Somehow, I find it easier to believe in the sincerity of this fear than in a sudden change of heart in yesterday's oppressors.

The point I tried to make in my speech was that the West should not hasten to rescue its bankrupt enemy, should not eliminate the need for painful internal reforms by providing economic assistance to the Soviet Union and its client states or by reducing the pressure of the military competition. Mr. Laqueur asserts that "the Russians have not been beneficiaries of massive credits," and therefore that my "fears that the West will end up paying for Communist expansion" are not "fully warranted." But recent OECD estimates show, to the contrary, that Soviet-bloc debt has increased 55 percent since 1984. According to the *Wall Street Journal* (December 7, 1987), the current rate of Soviet borrowing has reached a staggering $700 million a month; at least half of the country's hard-currency income is spent to prop up client states like Cuba, Nicaragua, and Vietnam. Moreover, the *Journal* indicates: "Remarkably, as debt rises, terms decline. From 1983 to 1986, the Soviet Union saw the average interest rate it pays drop from one to 0.15 point above the Libor benchmark. Brazil pays at least 0.75 of a point above Libor." This is exactly what I call "paying for Communist expansion," whether Mr. Laqueur finds my view "fully warranted" or not.

Even more frightening is Western willingness to disarm just for the sake of *glasnost*. No one has as yet explained why we need an INF treaty. In what way does it improve Western defense? All we hear are vague (and debatable) assurances that the treaty will not affect NATO capabilities. If so, why do we need it? Just to "help Gorbachev" in his struggle with the mysterious "old guard"? Or, perhaps, to appease the Western peace movement? Or, better still, to pave the way for a START agreement? None of these reasons seems to me "fully warranted." And what if the Soviets were to redeploy SS-20s, or their like, three or five years hence? Can anyone truly believe Western governments would be able to summon the political will to counter-deploy Pershings?

No, I do not think that the West can actually make Communism work: there is probably not enough money in the entire world to fulfill that particular dream. But it is quite possible to keep the Soviet system alive, though doing so might entail the disappearance of a few more nations from the face of the earth. Why must we undertake such a thankless task? Franklin D. Roosevelt liked "Uncle Joe" Stalin and apparently felt he could "do business" with him, and millions of East Europeans had to pay with their lives for that presidential urge. Ask the Cubans how they liked Khrushchev's "peaceful coexistence." Ask the Ethiopians, Angolans, Nicaraguans, Vietnamese, Cambodians, and Afghans how they liked Brezhnev's "détente." In those days, too, we were supposed to be helping "doves" fight "hawks" in the Kremlin. We were told that Brezhnev was the best we could hope for, and that we must not miss this golden opportunity to "improve relations." And now, just fifteen years later, no less an authority than Gorbachev himself has disclosed that Brezhnev was actually a "hawk." Whoops! Never mind, just a mild embarrassment for such wizards of Western Sovietology as Stephen Cohen and Marshall Shulman, and a bit too late for the nations listed above.

So why not stick to what we know reasonably well? And we do know that the huge Soviet empire is in the grip of a grave structural crisis. To judge by the experience of some East European countries, the empire is unlikely to solve its problems within the existing political framework, and seems headed for a period of popular unrest. We also know that in the past, every period of "thaw," "relaxation," "détente," etc. has ended in a further expansion of Communism and has led to a renewed period of "cold war" and international tension. Such is very likely to happen again, as the Soviet ruling elite may not be able to slow down the erosion of the political system by any other means. Should their current reforms fail, as they are likely to do, a renewed aggressiveness may be the only way for the members of the Soviet elite to save their political hides. Would it matter, then, whether they themselves are Stalinists, anti-Stalinists, or neo-Stalinists?

If there is even the slightest possibility of such an outcome, what right do we have to ignore it? Instead of playing the stupid game of good guys/bad guys in the Kremlin, why do we not prepare ourselves? Why weaken ourselves just at the moment when we may need all our strength? It is frightening to think how the West might be forced to respond to an unrestrained act of Soviet nuclear blackmail aggravated by a huge unrepaid Soviet debt. We have already had the pleasure of witnessing the mass hysteria of the peace movement of the early 1980's, when NATO still provided a sufficient

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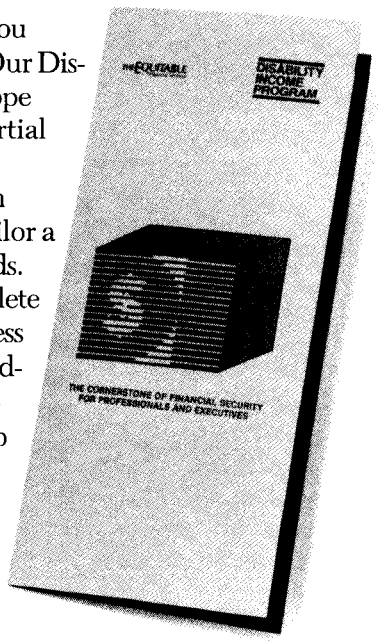

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deterrent; imagine the hysteria when there will be no such deterrent! We already know how helpless and accommodating creditor nations are vis-à-vis debtor nations. And we have seen how servile democratically elected governments can become when dealing even with ordinary terrorists. Are we willing to test all this against the most powerful machine of subversion and terror ever known, a machine which has so far been completely unaffected by *perestroika*?

Unfortunately, after living nearly twelve years in the West, I am only too aware that my warnings, and similar warnings by other "émigré intellectuals," are destined to remain unheeded. Where Mr. Laqueur is quite on target is in reminding us how wrong were the seemingly sophisticated diagnoses of many Western Sovietologists in the 60's and 70's. Yes, indeed, these Sovietologists have a skeleton in their filing cabinets. Unlike real scientists, they would rather be "moderate" than correct, and so they invented a lot of "reasons" why the testimony of émigrés should be ignored. We were, they said, "reactionary" and "biased"; and our views represented, at best, only a tiny minority. We were supposed to have chips on our shoulders, albatrosses around our necks, grudges in our pockets. Thanks to the efforts of these people, whose arrogance was matched only by their ignorance, we émigrés were virtually ostracized, banned from the public debate, silenced in the media.

I am therefore afraid that the "full post-mortem on two decades of Western Sovietology" called for by Mr. Laqueur will be grossly incomplete unless there is some admission that the failures were due to more than simple mistakes of analysis. How many scholars were forced to sacrifice the truth in order to be accepted in academic circles as "moderates," or in order to get their works published by prestigious presses? How many of those (particularly in the émigré community) seeking grants and tenure were forced to lie in order to survive professionally? What we have here are not the honest errors of some misled scholars but the acts of a mafia establishing its authority and protecting its interests.

And yet, at the end of the day, all the sophisticated books and learned articles of the Sovietological mafia have been exposed for what they are—a pile of trash. When we émigré intellectuals were living in the Soviet Union we were sent to jails and lunatic asylums for demanding *glasnost*; today, now that *glasnost* has become official policy, Moscow itself has confirmed, almost word for word, what we have been saying for a good twenty-five years,

What amusing reading these "scholarly works" thus provide. But can we say that justice has finally triumphed? Have the godfathers of Sovietology lost their prestige and influence? Are they ashamed and repentant? Far from it. They are still all over the place, advising governments, enlightening the public, writing their sophisticated articles and books about the struggle between "conservatives" and "reformers" in the Kremlin, all as if nothing had happened.

As for us, we are still "émigré intellectuals" with something on our shoulders, or around our necks. We are still "too extreme" and not sufficiently "balanced." But I am confident that a few years hence the Sovietologists will be proved wrong once again, and we right, because they have only their (or someone else's) opinions, while we have a knowledge of that unique political system in which we were born and brought up. If only the price to be paid for their "mistakes" were not so tragically high.

VLADIMIR BUKOVSKY
Cambridge, England

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I read Walter Laqueur's short description of my book, *Russia and the West: Gorbachev and the Politics of Reform*, with genuine disappointment. The problem is not that he misrepresented my views (he summarized the book quite accurately) or that he treated it too harshly (I feared the worst from COMMENTARY). And we hold a common judgment about "the pervasive harping by American commentators on the notion that Gorbachev needs our 'help.' "

The problem is that Mr. Laqueur and I come from the same intellectual tradition, with many similar original assumptions. Yet, instead of recognizing this and engaging in a serious dialogue with the argument of my book, he simply suggests that I am a gadfly, not always serious, and, of course, wrong on most points.

In fact, I am always completely serious in what I say, and, whether I am right or wrong, I am surprised that Mr. Laqueur does not recognize that I am presenting a very old-fashioned argument with which he used to have sympathy.

Mr. Laqueur does not like my thesis that the Bolshevik takeover was the Khomeini revolution in Russian history—a xenophobic, anti-Western revolution that was a break with the natural course of Russian history. But that analysis is simply the old totalitarian model, especially as developed by scholars such as Hannah Arendt.

The scholars advancing the totalitarian model treated the revolutions of 1905 and February 1917 as the natural line of Russian development and saw the Bolshevik Revolution as a coup d'état by fanatics who transformed Russian society and changed the course of its history. These scholars treated right-wing extremism and left-wing extremism, Nazism and Communism, as essentially similar. (It was, of course, recognized that there were also some differences between Hitler and Stalin, just as there are differences between Khomeini and the founders of the Bolshevik system.)

The sophisticated developers of the theory of totalitarianism understood that totalitarian movements sometimes attract considerable mass support in periods of great social dislocation. W.W. Rostow called Communism the "disease of the transition." In my opinion Hannah Arendt focused too much on anti-Semitism *per se* in discussing the rise of Bolshevism, but I think that she would have been right if she had generalized her point to talk about a xenophobic reaction to those perceived of as alien, including ultimately the Westernized Russian elite. As I stated in my book, "In a real sense the same xenophobic emotions that produced the anti-Jewish pogroms then produced the Bolshevik Revolution but now were directed at the entire Europeanized part of the population."

In my opinion Lenin received a good deal of support—and he did win 29 percent of the vote in the fairly free election of January 1918—not simply for economic-class reasons, but also because many of his supporters were rejecting the Western cultural-intellectual-political superstructure that had come with European capitalism.

Marxism has two possible implications in a Third World country like Russia of 1917: (1) capitalism

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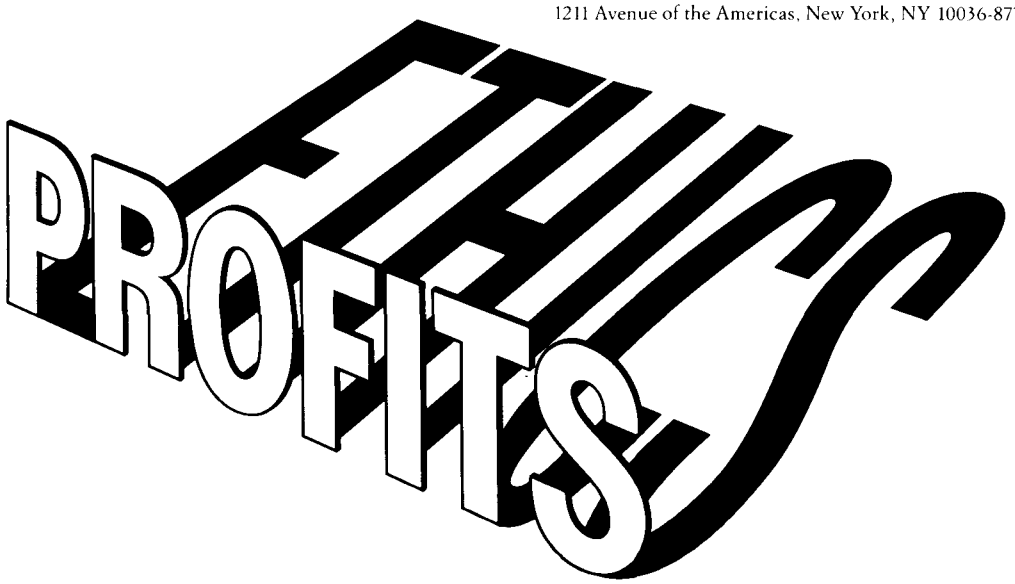

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follows feudalism, and the adoption of the European superstructure—Westernization—is hence historically inevitable, or (2) Western civilization has no inherent value but reflects the interests of alien, exploited classes. Those in the Mensheviks, the Bund, Legal Marxism, and so forth were Westerners who accepted the first implication in their hearts; the Bolsheviks and their supporters found the superstructure repulsive ("satanic") and fought to overthrow the classes who had the interest of introducing it. The essence of the revolution was the creation of iron curtains against frightening Western ideas and market forces.

That is, right or wrong, I strongly disagree with the current Soviet tendency to treat Lenin as a Swedish social democrat and I think that the conservatives were right in saying that the essence of Communism was the rejection of Western civilization. It was Alain Besançon's view of Lenin and the West that I quoted at length on pp. 50-51 of my book.

Those who developed the totalitarian model in the 1940's and the 1950's were right in suggesting that the autarchy of Communism was not soon to disappear, but the logic of the model was that change would eventually occur. As Raymond Aron predicted in 1955, a large educated middle class would eventually be created, with corrosive results; the youth who were not xenophobic in the 1950's but instead yearned for Western music and clothes would eventually become middle-aged; and since total autarchy meant total protectionism for Russian monopolistic industrialists, Western economic theory certainly predicted that autarchy would eventually produce economic stagnation that could be overcome only by a major opening to the West to attack the protectionism. The drive for power inherent in the ideology would eventually require an end to autarchy: the disease of the transition would in the long run be transitory.

Mr. Laqueur is very critical of the predictive record of Soviet studies in the past, but his memory is selective. For example, I wrote a series of books and articles in the late 70's and early 80's (including *Soviet Leadership in Transition*, 1980) that emphasized the importance of the coming social change—especially the coming to power of the Gorbachev generation born after 1926—and that led to predictions of which I am quite proud.

Of course, everyone has now abandoned Aron and Arendt and accepted the Trotskyist analysis of Isaac Deutscher. In the current conventional wisdom, the Soviet Union does not have a middle class, but only the ruling managers of the means of production—the bureaucrats; the political leaders do not dominate society, but are a superstructure that cannot challenge the interests of the ruling class; ideology is not dedicated to transformation and total power, but to the preservation of the status quo (the old definition of an authoritarian state in contrast to a totalitarian one).

In my view, this is nonsense. The middle class, including "bureaucrats" and middle-class workers, want freedom and challenging jobs and the chance to enrich themselves instead of total security. They are not privileged bureaucrats, but instead are people suppressed by a severe dictatorship.

Obviously my analysis is controversial. One can understand why the Marxist-tinged post-Vietnam generation may not like it. But those who come out of a pre-Vietnam tradition like Mr. Laqueur should explain where they think my analysis has gone wrong. Do they really believe that total protectionism, coupled with monopolistic ministries, is compatible with economic performance? Do they believe that Soviet leaders no longer care about national power, especially in the face of a rising China? Do they think that even the military chief of staff, Marshal Akhromeev, leads as good a life as the average American colonel—and that he will fight to sabotage any effort to improve his life? And are they really willing to defend the proposition that the Russian-educated middle class—unlike the middle class in Argentina, Brazil, Spain, and South Korea—simply yearns to be repressed?

The time has come to think through and debate our assumptions about the Soviet Union with the greatest of seriousness. A return to ancient truths must be part of that debate.

JERRY HOUGH
Duke University
Durham, North Carolina

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I have just read Walter Laqueur's article in your July issue. Because Mr. Laqueur's characterization of my book, *Origins of the Great Purges*, is so manifestly misleading, I should like to clear up a few points. Mr. Laqueur misquotes, misrepresents, and so distorts my argument as to make it unrecognizable. Compare:

1. *Laqueur*: "According to this work, the purges of the party conducted in the late 30's mainly arose out of disagreements at the top over economic issues."

Getty: ". . . three central issues preoccupied party leaders in the period and comprised the context for the Great Purges. These three problems were economic planning, the fate of the former opposition, and the control and rationalization of the territorial party apparatus. Of the three, the struggle within the party apparatus is the focus of most of this study. . ." (p. 12). The vast bulk of my book is about party-political matters; economic debates are a minor sidelight.

2. *Laqueur*: "Getty implies that not all that many people perished in the purges, certainly fewer than has been claimed by 'cold-war' historians."

Getty: "The *Ezhovshchina* [terror] was a maelstrom of political violence that involved all bureaucratic factions and interest groups" (p. 172). "Repression during the *Ezhovshchina* was widespread and savage" (p. 177). My book made no attempt to estimate the number of victims: "Lacking evidence, all estimates are equally worthless, and it is hard to disagree with Brzezinski's observation that it is impossible to make any estimates without erring in the hundreds of thousands or even millions" (p. 258). My discussion of numbers related solely to expulsions from the party (on which we do have good data) and noted that such figures are unsatisfactory as a gauge of the incidence of the terror on society.

3. *Laqueur*: "Getty does concede . . . that Stalin is not altogether to be exonerated, but his main crime was apparently not to pay enough attention to what his underlings were doing."

Getty: ". . . regardless of the real nature and extent of [Stalin's] participation, his position as party leader forces upon him primary responsibility for the events that ensued under his leadership" (p. 9). "Stalin used police repression of 'enemies of the people' to settle old scores and to destroy anyone he chose" (p. 172). "All it took from Stalin were catalytic and probably *ad hoc* interventions . . . to spark

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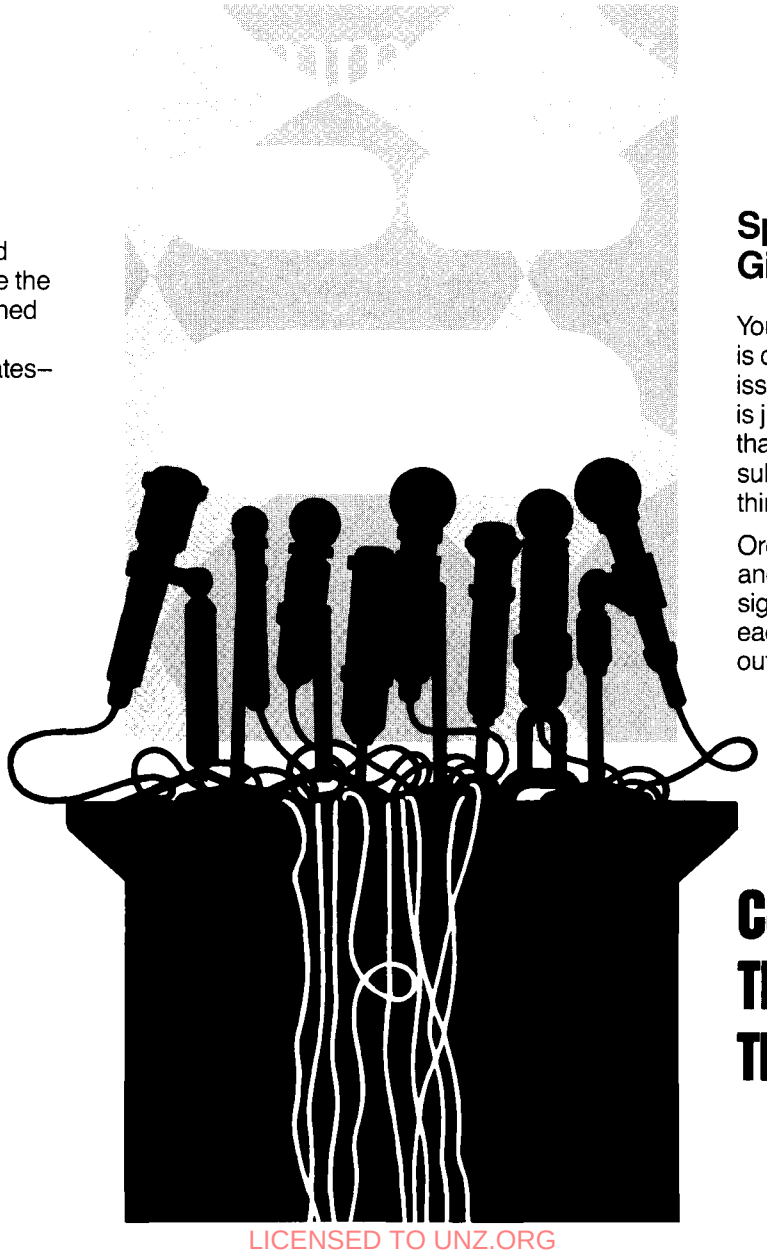

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Commentary. The Thoughts That Count.

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an uncontrolled explosion. That he did so intervene speaks for itself" (p. 206).

Having ignored the thesis of my book and disregarded the archival evidence upon which it relied, Mr. Laqueur was able to present it in such a way as to put it in contrast with current revelations from Moscow. This is not true. (He similarly distorts the solidly-based work of Robert W. Thurston and Moshe Lewin, but they can speak for themselves.)

Given Walter Laqueur's reputation as a professional historian, I am also puzzled by his distress at the "habitual academic tendency to rely on facts and figures" and his explicit condemnation of "the scholarly approach." Quite aside from the anti-empirical tone of his remarks, one can note that there is a vast difference between using facts and figures disseminated for propaganda and those found in secret internal documents meant for administrative purposes. Studies of Nazi Germany, treatments of other topics in political history, and most of Mr. Laqueur's own work have relied on such careful and discriminating use of sources.

J. Arch Getty
University of California
Riverside, California

To the Editor of Commentary:

Walter Laqueur's wise article on *glasnost* whets the appetite for his forthcoming book on the same subject. I would like, however, to take issue with him on one point, not central to his argument, but nevertheless important.

Mr. Laqueur contends that although under Gorbachev there have occurred "revolutions" in literature, theater, and film-making, no such thing has occurred in music and the visual arts—which, he rightly observes, "suffered enormously under Stalin." (Music, I would argue, suffered less, but that is a separate discussion.)

I have to disagree with Mr. Laqueur about the visual arts, where I think he underestimates what has occurred since 1985. In fact, the magnificent George Costakis collection of the Russian avant-garde, 80 percent of which is now in the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow, went (in part) on public exhibition in 1986. Costakis himself, who had been driven abroad in 1978 by a hostile officialdom, and now lives in Greece, was invited back to Moscow as an honored guest for that occasion, and went. An important article about the exhibition by a respected Soviet art critic (Moscow *News*, No. 37, 1986) in effect swept away the whole absurd edifice of official and unofficial art in the Soviet Union, declaring that the "Russian fine arts of the 20th century" had been "forfeited to the West" and that this constituted a national disgrace. Costakis, about whom . . . I am now writing a book, tells me that young Soviet painters are today painting what they want to paint, that much of it is very good, and that they are free to sell it at home or abroad. If one thinks of the arts scene in Russia only ten years ago, here indeed is a revolution as remarkable as those in literature and theater.

Mr. Laqueur might be interested to know that, on the future of *glasnost*, Costakis takes the view that (to quote him) "the genie is out of the bottle and nobody can put it back." He is of course thinking mainly of the arts and intellectual life, and in that context it is an informed opinion which cannot be dismissed. I personally agree with Mr. Laqueur that *glasnost* has probably reached its apogee, at least for several years to come, and that the best we can hope for is that the indisputable gains which have been made in cultural life should not be weakened as the twin ships of *glasnost* and *perestroika* lose steam in the years ahead.

Peter Roberts
Director, The Canada Council
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Walter Laqueur writes:

Alain Besançon and Vladimir Bukovsky are mainly preoccupied with the prospects of *perestroika*, whereas the subject of my article was *glasnost*. One cannot, of course, entirely separate the one from the other, but I also could not cover all aspects of contemporary Soviet politics in the framework of one article. I certainly like their new formulations better than their original ones, in which they tended to underrate the extent of the ferment taking place in Moscow. (Incidentally, although there is a journal called *Obrozenie*, Mr. Bukovsky is quite correct that I was referring to his article in *Survey*.)

While xenophobia may have been a factor in the Russian Revolution of 1917, as Jerry Hough contends, it was certainly not a decisive one; if Mr. Hough were right, the Black Hundred and not Lenin would have emerged as the new masters of Russia. True, later on "socialism in one country" gave a strong impetus to Russian nationalism, but that is another story.

I have never shared the changing views of Hannah Arendt on totalitarianism; she did not know enough about the Soviet Union to theorize on the subject. Isaac Deutscher, of course, knew much more, but his judgment was clouded by ideology. I am less familiar than is Mr. Hough with current academic thought in the field of Sovietology, but I hope that he exaggerates a little when he says that "everyone" has now abandoned Raymond Aron and accepted the Trotskyite analysis of Isaac Deutscher; I know a few people who have not. Even if his assessment should be correct, however, I would be neither surprised nor shocked. In this field, the strangest views have found advocates from time to time.

The wider issues raised by Mr. Hough certainly are of importance but cannot be addressed briefly; I am at present trying to deal with them in a longer study.

As for J. Arch Getty, I do not think I misquoted or distorted his arguments. But I could not possibly do justice to his interpretation of Stalin's terror in a mere ten lines. I urge readers interested in the subject to obtain his book, *Origins of the Great Purges*, published by Cambridge University Press in 1985.

Mr. Getty blames me for making it appear that what he wrote is in contrast with current revelations in Moscow. He should blame instead the Soviet editors and censors who have passed Arthur Koestler's *Darkness at Noon* and the work of Vasily Grossman, who have published Shalamov, Razgon, and hundreds of other accounts of the purges, trials, and camps, who will publish Nadezhda Mandelstam, Roy Medvedev, and perhaps even Solzhenitsyn.

My problem is not with facts, figures, and the scholarly approach, but with the fact that Mr. Getty has come up with the wrong answers, which contradict both historical evidence and common sense. With some justice Mr. Getty could argue that it was unfair of me to single him out from a whole group of authors who wrote studies which they no doubt felt detached, scholarly, and objective, but who, in retrospect, would have been better advised not to publish.

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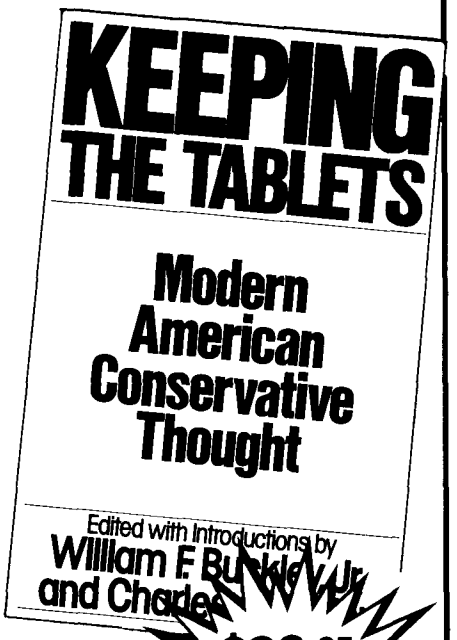

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A recent article by Yevgeny Yevtushenko in *Ogonyok* (Number 29, 1988) provides a fitting epitaph to this body of work: "So much material has now been published in our media unmasking the total war against the people which took place at that time that even if nine-tenths of it were exaggerated, it should be sufficient to cure all naiveté. But some people prefer to stay blind. They love not Stalin but their blindness."

And yet, I feel that most people do learn from their mistakes. I suspect that if Mr. Getty were writing his book in 1988, he would make some interesting changes.

Finally, I would like to thank Peter Roberts for his letter. I should have made it clear that my observations referred to the official artistic establishment, not to developments outside it.

Poetry

To the Editor of Commentary:

Joseph Epstein ["Who Killed Poetry?," August] was precisely right about the current poetry "scene" (the readings, the academic appointments, etc.). It's a peculiar sociological phenomenon. As poetry becomes "sadly peripheral," hundreds and hundreds of jobs for poets open up. . . . In numerous ways, these many jobs for "poetry-writing teachers" conceal from our poets themselves the situation we find ourselves in (and I speak as someone who has taught his share of classes). Instead of readers we have undiscerning and potentially idolatrous undergraduates; each campus is a little kingdom. And how are you going to convince people that the world itself is in trouble when the kingdom is running fine? . . .

When poetry becomes sadly peripheral, an unavoidable disaffection sets in. The poet knows that he has dedicated himself to the finest and highest art that there is. (Just as the composer or the painter "knows" that *he* has dedicated himself to the finest art there is. One must begin with the occluded vision of the monomaniac.) And to be told, implicitly or expressly, that the finest and highest art doesn't really matter leads to all sorts of problems. The resulting alienation may in its way turn out to be productive, but it effectively rules out the flourishing of all sorts of poetry (including most light verse) that is built on the unvoiced understanding that poetry has a caring audience. . . .

I can't help feeling that the "crisis" of contemporary verse is in large part methodological. Poets (even if not all of them know it) are tired or mistrustful of the iambic line that has dominated English-language verse for half a millennium. In a number of cases, I'm afraid, this distaste comes from an absolute inability to work skillfully with meter—but there are also sound, commendable reasons for wishing to create something new. The alternative to iambic verse would seem to be free verse—but it seems tired at the moment. It isn't inexhaustible in the way that metric verse is. If many poets don't recognize the situation clearly, they at least perceive it dimly, and are made uncomfortable by it.

Brad Leithauser
South Hadley, Massachusetts

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . Joseph Epstein is absolutely right that no one, today, is awaiting the next utterance of any writer in the same way we once—only to be disappointed—awaited the next "big book" by Hemingway. As a cultural matter, writing seems to matter less today than it once did. On the other hand, if I attend to my own personal experience, as distinguished from my cultural experience, things look very different. There *are* recent poems that do mean a great deal to me.

"In a Free Country," by Daniel Mark Epstein (1978), for example, seems to me breathtakingly successful. A sort of sonnet, it has a daring of hyperbole that reminds me of John Donne. His "Miami" also seems to me a very powerful and successful poem, about his father who was a gangster. I would also recommend Donald Justice's poem about Henry James in Coronado Beach. Finally, there is much to be excited about in Richard Wilbur's *New and Collected Poems*. . . .

Still, Mr. Epstein is on to something in his essay. Maybe poetry is now too *easy* to write, in a certain sense. All the technical devices, invented with great effort, are now completely accessible. Maybe the academy has replaced the muse. . . . I cannot imagine Yeats teaching at Amherst, for instance. . . .

Jeffrey Hart
Department of English
Dartmouth College

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . Who—or what—*did* kill poetry? . . . All the causes mentioned by Joseph Epstein are valid to some degree. In general, it just isn't in our culture right now to produce "major," enjoyable poetry. (There is perhaps an illuminating key to the puzzle in the analogy of the failure of atonal music to find a public. . . .) If we are looking for a single answer to the question, I think it is to be found near the end of Joseph Epstein's article in the words "chilled in the classroom." Poetry is *taught* to young people who take "electives" and have no real education that might supply the matrix for it, and it is taught in a second-hand "scholarly" fashion involving influences, references, allusions, technical terms. . . .

Mr. Epstein has done a good job. I would add one line to his list of favorites, the opening line of Yeats's poem, "Sailing to Byzantium," by the poet whom T.S. Eliot himself called the greatest poet of our time.

Bert Lippman
Dothan, Alabama

To the Editor of Commentary:

Joseph Epstein, in his anatomy of a murder, did a good job of rounding up the usual suspects. But along with the writing workshops, the reviewers, the non-reviewers, the readers, the non-readers, and the poets themselves, he should have arraigned a couple of other culprits who alone would have made poetry's death absolutely inevitable—at least as a popular art form. Their names are Edison and Marconi.

It is pretty clear that poetry has existed through the history of human culture because of two interrelated characteristics: (1) it provides moments of emotional or aesthetic intensity, and (2) it provides these moments in a memorable and *memorizable* way. These moments can be as short as a phrase, or as long as an epic, but they are sustained by the way poetry works to lodge itself in human memory, through meter and rhyme. Meter and rhyme also work to make poetry *reproducible*—the phrases, the lines, the paragraphs don't go away, but are there to be drawn on and replayed to oneself. . . .

In one generation, between the invention of the gramophone and the invention of the radio, poetry lost its exclusive claim to the properties of memorizability, reproduc-

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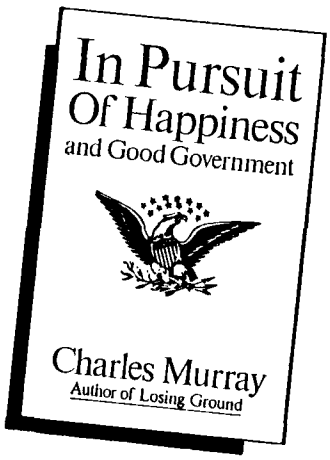

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ibility, and emotional intensity. Popular song . . . has usurped the features that once made poetry an indispensable part of the texture of human life. . . .

So I think it hardly matters that the poets of Robert Lowell's and John Berryman's generation weren't good enough—the invention of the gramophone and the radio would have doomed poetry anyway. The recording, and its instant, constant availability, has made the human technology of meter and rhyme a highbrow luxury—like original-instrument perfomances of classical music. And that is why the closest thing we have to the great best-selling poets of the 19th century like Tennyson and Byron are Robert Zimmerman (a/k/a Bob Dylan) and William "Smokey" Robinson, alas. . . .

SAMUEL E. SCHULMAN
New England Monthly
Haydenville, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In answer to the question, "Who Killed Poetry?," Joseph Epstein concludes that it was, in fact, the transfer of poetry from "the world" to "the classroom" that ultimately finished off the victim. . . . Yet poetry was never really *transferred* from the world to the classroom; it simply atrophied and died in the world, while a frail and ridiculous impostor has been nourished in the workshops of academia. . . . If there were a vigorous poetic literature widely published and read outside the university, no one would give a moment's notice to the impostor. As it is, our Parnassus is so desolate that any sign of life excites attention.

What killed poetry and prevents its resurrection is the absence of that pleasure principle described by Philip Larkin. . . . An appetite for the specific pleasure, the exalted joy that can only be experienced through great poetry, has all but disappeared from the literate class, as Mr. Epstein points out. Moreover, our professional poets, for the most part, no longer have the desire, much less the ability, to create that particular pleasure for their readership. . . .

ERIC B. GOODMAN
Louisville, Kentucky

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I agree with Joseph Epstein's very sensible analysis of contemporary poetry, but I think he does not pay quite enough attention to the argument that, as he puts it, "the great themes are gone and all that remains to poetry is a pallid subjectivity." It used to be that the aim of poetry was to ennoble. Today one must doubt that the majority of poets even believe there is such a thing as nobility. . . .

DAVID LEVY
Alexandria, Virginia

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Poetry is alive and well and living in Appalachia. . . . I feel honor bound to inform Joseph Epstein that in our part of the world poetry is written and read by people who are and are not attending workshops. A partial list of such poets, living and recently deceased, would include Nikki Giovanni, Billy Edd Wheeler, Jim Wayne Miller, Wendell Berry, James Stokely, Jesse Stuart, Harriette Arnow, George Ella Lyon, Albert Stewart, and Marilou Awiakta.

I invite Mr. Epstein to look into such journals as *Appalachian Heritage* (published at Berea College), *Now and Then* (published by East Tennessee State), or the anthology *Voices From the Hills* (edited by Robert Higgs), to find a sample of poetry which is still alive.

TRISHA MORRIS
University of Kentucky
Prestonburg, Kentucky

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I hope Joseph Epstein will refresh his recollection from the following and undo his canard about the poetry of the last forty years:

"They fuck you up, your mum and dad"; "rainbow, rainbow, rainbow"; "they washed me out of the turret with a hose"; "I knew a woman lovely in her bones"; "in a pure floating/ of dark habits,/ keeping their difficult balance"; "I thought hard for us all—my only swerving"; "Wherever I am/ I am what is missing"; "a savage servility/ slides by on grease"; "at the flute end of consequences"; "and, month after month, the whip-/ crack of the mortgage."

"My eyes in spectacles shall see/ These trees procure and spend their leaves"; "I learn by going where I have to go"; "The wet dawn inks are doing their blue dissolve"; "Often he reckons, in the dawn, them up./ Nobody is ever missing"; "We real cool"; "if I stepped out of my body I would break/ into blossom"; "And I eat men like air"; "When the bronze annals of the oak tree close"; "drive, he sd"; "I shake my wings/ and fly into its boughs"; "No. Not this pig"; "America I am putting my queer shoulder to the wheel"; "And bowing not knowing to what"; "The swimmer floats, the lover sleeps."

"And the angel in the gate, the flowering plum,/ Dances like Italy, imagining red"; "of love's austere and lonely offices"; "with second-rate flowers/ Awkward and milky and beautiful only to hunger"; "Driving around, I will waste more time"; "lovely white clover that rusts with its grass"; "like an arrow-shower/ Sent out of sight, somewhere becoming rain"; "The spirit breaks, a puff of dust floats up,/ Like a house in Nebraska that suddenly explodes"; "with many shadows interleaved,/ And pierced with a bewilderment of birds."

I could quote poems to Mr. Epstein all night, and I expect he'd want to put in some, too—poems worth our lives if we didn't have them.

ROBERT WALLACE
Case Western Reserve University
Cleveland, Ohio

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Joseph Epstein is one of our best and most provocative essayists, and fun-loving too—a rare accomplishment in our times. But I doubt that poetry is today another Humpty-Dumpty, as he seems to imply, and that we may never see the whole egg again, and surely not the bird. . . .

Mr. Epstein complains that even recent poets he admires have not planted "language in my head." But could this not be because he read poets like Eliot or Yeats or Marianne Moore in his youth, when words may make a more lasting impression? Surely a poem like Derek Walcott's "North and South" has vital things to say about our society in an impassioned, original, and arresting way. What could be more magical or better said than Walcott's "The Season of Phantasmal Peace"?

Clearly, W.S. Merwin and Galway Kinnell have written as beautifully and persuasively as their predecessors. Is Mr. Epstein prepared to demonstrate that "Lemuel's Blessing" and "The Bear" are not great poems? . . .

I hope Mr. Epstein is currently reflecting on the death of the novel for his next provocation. At least that will give some poets a chance to laugh a bit.

ROBERT STERN
Chicago, Illinois

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ELECTRICITY—ACUTE NEED FOR NEW SUPPLY

Long after the searing summer heat has passed, 1988 will be remembered as the year many of America's utilities recorded electricity demand they hadn't expected until the 1990s. That may make 1988 the year that America awakens to the pressing need to build new electric generating capacity.

Hot weather is only part of the story. Even without the record summer heat, the U.S. is quickly approaching the time when electric utilities will not be able to meet normal growth in electricity demand. In some regions, they already can't.

Higher Than Forecast

Since 1982, when the U.S. economy emerged from recession, growth in electricity sales has been much higher than most experts had forecast. If this rate of growth persists—and, without a recession, it will—electricity demand will overtake reliable, cost-effective supply as early as 1990.

Electricity use is growing faster than expected because the U.S. economy is becoming more electricity-intensive, continuing a long-term trend. America's use of nonelectric forms of energy has declined about 10 percent since the 1973 Arab oil embargo, but electricity use has increased about 50 percent, with almost all the increase provided by coal and nuclear energy. Electric power has been the engine driving our economic growth. The 50 percent increase in electric use since 1973 has given us about a 45 percent increase in GNP. Electrification also increases our energy efficiency, reducing the amount of energy required per unit of GNP.

The Oil Problem

New baseload electric power plants can also help avert another looming crisis—this nation's growing addiction to imported oil. This dependence is a direct threat to our national security and worsens our trade deficit.

The problem with oil is that most of the world's supply belongs to other countries. The U.S. has less than 5 percent of the world's oil reserves and our production is declining, yet we use more than 25 percent of the world's production and our consumption is rising. America's oil imports are rising, rapidly approaching 50 percent of all the oil we use. Last year, the U.S. paid about $40 billion for imported oil, one-fourth of our record trade deficit.

The solution to our growing foreign oil dependence is the same today as it was after the 1973–74 oil embargo—to use energy more efficiently and to turn to more electricity generated from fuels like nuclear energy and coal that America has in abundance.

The Benefits of Nuclear Energy

Nuclear energy is now America's second largest source of electricity, after coal. We have 109 nuclear electric plants licensed to operate in 33 states. Since 1973, our nuclear electric plants have helped us cut the use of foreign oil by 3½ billion barrels and reduced our payments to foreign oil producers by $105 billion. And these plants have operated only for about one-quarter of their useful lives, so their benefits—already large—will continue to grow.

Nuclear energy also has environmental benefits and does not contribute to the "greenhouse effect." Since 1973, the 412 nuclear electric plants around the world have cut the world's coal use by over 2.5 billion tons and its oil use by about 16 billion barrels, with resulting reductions in "greenhouse" gases.

Despite our growing need, regulatory, political and financial uncertainties prevent electric utilities from planning the new baseload power plants—coal or nuclear—that are required. Our economic growth and national security depend on removing those obstacles.

Otherwise, electric utilities will be forced to turn back to oil-fired plants that were relegated to limited service by the coal and nuclear electric plants built over the last 15 years. This means more expensive electricity and even greater dependence on imported oil from the unstable Middle East.

Nuclear electric power plants, by themselves, cannot solve the tensions in the Persian Gulf or our other oil-related problems. But they helped America and the rest of the world overcome the energy crises of the 1970s. They are fueling our economic growth. And they can help cushion us against economic and military shocks in the 1990s and beyond.

Harold B. Finger
President and Chief Executive Officer
U.S. Council For Energy Awareness

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Soviet Dissidents

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his article, "'Glasnost,' the KGB, and the *Nation*" [June], Joshua Muravchik misrepresents circumstances, argues through innuendo, and libels the *Nation* and ourselves. In the *Nation* article that Mr. Muravchik denounces, we raised the genuine concern that in receiving U.S. government funds via the National Endowment for Democracy [NED], the Center for Democracy in the USSR opens itself to accusations by the Soviet authorities that it is a tool of the American government. The Center is thus in danger of compromising the very people it aims to support. The article was not written with disregard for the welfare of Soviet dissidents, particularly Sergei Grigoryants. It is madness to suggest that the article was written in collusion with Soviet authorities.

Leaving aside his biased, intemperate tone, Mr. Muravchik makes a number of factual errors and misrepresentations. For example:

1. Mr. Muravchik claims that none of the eleven research categories listed in Yuri Yarim-Agaev's March 1984 proposal for a Soviet Studies Research Center involved military information.

• One category in the proposal is clearly titled "The Military and Society." Information was to be gathered about the "militarization of civil life . . . resource allocations of the military in the economy, politics, and society."

2. Mr. Muravchik asserts that there is no link between the March 1984 proposal and the Center for Democracy in the USSR, of which Yuri Yarim-Agaev is executive director. "Instead," he writes, "the NED agreed to fund a small feasibility study conducted by Yarim-Agaev" and others.

• He neglects to mention that this feasibility study, which led to the creation of the Center, resuscitated the principles described in the March 1984 proposal. The language of the Center's feasibility proposal may have been more discreet, but the principles laid out in the 1984 document were intact—establishing sources inside the Soviet Union, finding information about tourist trips to the USSR, and identifying people in Europe who would find, brief, and debrief tourists.

3. Mr. Muravchik claims that we ignored relevant material about the Center provided by the NED, implying that our sole source was the March 1984 document.

• We used a wide range of NED material in writing the article, including the above-mentioned feasibility study describing the Center's purpose and programs. We also studied the Center's quarterly reports, which revealed the number of Western travelers sent to the Soviet Union by the Center as part of what it called an "independent exchange program."

Mr. Muravchik concedes that people who care about the fate of human rights and Soviet dissidents were concerned about the Center for Democracy's use of U.S. government funds. "Critics have complained," Mr. Muravchik acknowledges, "that such 'high-profile' activity, conducted with public funds, may actually increase their [the dissidents'] jeopardy." It was that concern that motivated us in writing the *Nation* article. As we stated, "In this struggle for growing tolerance and openness [in the Soviet Union], any Western effort, whether inadvertent or intentional, to use Soviet citizens for ulterior purposes can only end badly all around—for those who have had ties to dissident and independent political activity in the Soviet Union, for Gorbachev's reform program, and for those in the West who care about human rights."

KATRINA VANDEN HEUVEL
KEVIN COOGAN
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Readers of Joshua Muravchik's article in the June COMMENTARY might also be interested in some letters from leading dissidents who were living in the Soviet Union while the Center for Democracy in the USSR was carrying out its programs. It seems evident that these and only these people can provide the ultimate answer to the question of whether the Center helped them and their friends or hurt them, and the question of whether the *Nation*'s article damaged or helped the journal *Glasnost* and its editor, Sergei Grigoryants. Most of these letters were sent to the *Nation* but did not find space in its pages. Copies were given to me to be made public at my discretion.

YURI YARIM-AGAEV
Center for Democracy
in the USSR
New York City

FROM SERGEI GRIGORYANTS:

Half a year has passed since the publication of the article in the *Nation*, which has brought us nothing but trouble. It would seem that the results of its publication are obvious. Nevertheless, one still hears voices arguing that the *Nation* magazine was sincerely trying to help our journal *Glasnost*. Evidently, we must enumerate the results of this "help."

On March 26, 1988 Iona Andronov [the New York correspondent for the Soviet newspaper *Literaturnaya Gazeta*], using materials which were provided to him by Katrina vanden Heuvel and Kevin Coogan, declared in his paper that *Glasnost* was being published with funds from the CIA, that on the orders of this organization it was provoking "conflict situations in Nagorno-Karabakh, Georgia, Latvia, and the Crimea," and that it was also guilty of many other improper acts. . . .

The *Nation* article was reprinted in three Soviet publications, and Andronov's revelations were reprinted in the newspaper *Soviet Siberia*. Even now Miss vanden Heuvel and Mr. Coogan's materials are still being used in the USSR for badgering the independent press.

As for *Glasnost*, the campaign ended in the destruction and robbery of the editorial offices on May 9, 1988, from which we have still not recovered. We have also not managed to find new office space, and trying to put out issues from tiny private apartments has slowed us up doubly. If there were once 200 copies of the journal circulating in Moscow, today the situation is such that *Glasnost* is practically the only publication in Moscow which people are afraid to copy and distribute, so great is the threat of persecution and arrest. . . .

We are reminded that the authors of the article were critical not of *Glasnost*, but of those who are now publishing it in the United States. But by reprinting the magazine in English (as well as in French, German, Spanish, and other languages), these people are helping us first of all to fulfill one of the fundamental aims stipulated in the first issue of *Glasnost*: to acquaint not only Soviets but also readers abroad with what is going on in the Soviet Union. Secondly, as far as international interest in our magazine goes, it is only publica-

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tion abroad that can save the magazine from the arbitrariness of the authorities. Thus, I can only be grateful to the publishers of *Glasnost* in the United States who have taken on this activity.

One might say that the *Nation*'s writers are not responsible for the fact that the Soviet press has incorrectly used and even distorted their material (Mr. Coogan sent a protest to *Literaturnaya Gazeta,* which of course was not published). But can it really be that Miss vanden Heuvel and Mr. Coogan—who write as specialists in Soviet affairs—did not know that our press has never behaved any differently and cannot possibly do so? Can it really be that they did not understand what their uncorroborated discoveries would lead to?

Thank God we have not been arrested yet. It is possible that the editorial staff will manage to right itself after the havoc we experienced in May. But if the writers from the *Nation* call themselves friends, then truly, with such friends, who needs enemies?

FROM IRINA RATUSHINSKAYA and IGOR GERASHCHENKO:

The *Nation* authors refer to a comparison (in *Newsweek*) between the independent magazine *Glasnost* and a canary in a coal mine: if the bird suffocates, so too might the movement that bears its name. This is quite true, but such "canaries" do not suffocate by themselves—they must be smothered deliberately. Unfortunately, there are plenty of volunteers to do the job, and not only among straight-out KGB agents.

The appropriate Soviet agencies know very well how to smother independent journals within the Soviet Union. They begin with slanderous newspaper articles about supposed collaboration with the CIA (this point is a must!) and end with physical violence and arrests, from which the staff of *Glasnost* has not been safe for a single moment. . . .

Glasnost does not just collect and publish a huge amount of information on social problems in the Soviet Union, . . . it also gives anyone in the West the right to publish this information. At the moment, the Center for Democracy is the only agency in the U.S. that has taken up this information . . . and bears the expenses connected with publishing *Glasnost* in English, despite its own financial difficulties. . . . What if tomorrow the Center no longer had the resources to continue, and *Glasnost* lost its chance to publish here? What would happen then to the "canary" for which the writers in the *Nation* express such concern?

Yes, it is undoubtedly dangerous for the editors of *Glasnost* to be published in the West at all—by the Center or by anyone else. It is also dangerous in the Soviet Union, where all human-rights activities are automatically labeled "anti-Soviet" by the authorities. . . . Nonetheless, there are people who despite constant threats and harassment take this risk and take it for the sake of human rights.

Although the *Nation* cites "leading human-rights activists" in the U.S. who are opposed to the Cen-

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ter, it is first and foremost up to the activists who now represent this movement within the Soviet Union itself to determine what should be done, and how, so that the "canary" will not suffocate. The rest of us, all those who . . . cannot be at their side and share the risks with them, should help in their efforts—including in the publication of *Glasnost*—if we still want the right to call ourselves human-rights activists. . . .

The greatest danger for the Soviet human-rights movement is the cessation of publicity in other countries; all the undesirables in the USSR can then be easily jailed. Who would then compile information about arrests and other human-rights abuses? . . . It is simple to suffocate the "canary"—by general silence, and also by compromising those who break this silence. . . .

We can attest to the fact that the Center never turned to us for any intelligence information but helped us when we were in the Soviet Union—from sending vitamins for the women's labor camp to providing material support and information for many dissidents. We hope the zealots of legality will forgive the Center for not sending these vitamins and other things through the Soviet post office!

We know that one can always turn to the Center for information on prisoners of conscience in the USSR: who is in which camp, who has been released, who has been rearrested, who is in internal exile, who is in a psychiatric prison. We have checked this information many times through independent sources (including human-rights activists in the USSR), and every time it has proved accurate.

Inasmuch as we do not receive any funds for human-rights activities—either from the U.S. government or from other organizations—we hope that our testimony will be regarded as that of independent people. . . .

FROM EDWARD KUZNETSOV:

The article in the *Nation* about activities of Yuri Yarim-Agaev's Center for Democracy is most interesting as a compendium of left-wing liberal tactics in the struggle for "progressive change." The structure of this type of essay is touchingly simple. First comes the slightly disguised declaration: we are the only true champions of democracy; all others stem from the devil—that is, from the CIA, since for an American liberal there is no greater enemy than American intelligence. Then comes a very meticulous investigation: where did the "reactionaries" get the means of operation, and what are their means? . . . Before the curtain falls there is some sad worrying: what if the intrigues of the CIA protégés were to harm democracy everywhere in the world? (As a rule, this is the part that sounds most false in tone, and no wonder, after such acrobatics.)

But for better or worse, the deed is done, the side of "reaction" is once again criticized in print. If, as the result of it all, some Grigoryants, or whatever his name is, is accused by the KGB of connections with "foreign special services," then the reactionaries from the Center can again be blamed for it. After all, the Center receives its funds from the National Endowment for Democracy, behind which (as all good left-wing liberals must assume) lies the CIA.

The logic of the argument is undeniable—undeniable, that is, if one does not know that the CIA under American law cannot have any relations with the NED. But this is a fact of real life at which any visionary creator of the new, "the unheard of" society looks with scorn, because everything that does not fit the ideological scheme . . . does not exist. . . .

FROM VLADLEN PAVLENKOV:

. . . Let us suppose that the founders of the Center for Democracy originally made mistakes; let us suppose that they may still pursue some misguided projects. How would a person genuinely concerned, as the authors of the *Nation* profess to be, with "those who have had ties to dissident and independent political activity in the Soviet Union" . . . act in such an event? There must be many possible avenues of action, but I am quite convinced that a denunciation to the KGB is not one of them. The *Nation* article, in my opinion, is precisely such a denunciation.

The authors are quite right in saying that "the Soviet government has traditionally associated most kinds of dissident activity with so-called enemies of the Soviet Union abroad." Acting at the "instigation" of the West is one of the charges on which many dissidents — including myself — were convicted. The prosecutor at my trial quoted from articles in the Western press very similar in tone to that of Miss vanden Heuvel and Mr. Coogan. . . .

FROM NADIA SVETLICHNAYA, LEONID PLYUSHCH, and MYKOLA RUDENKO:

. . . The material in the *Nation* article quickly spread to several countries in the form of highly sensational news reports. For example, the Danish newspaper *Information*, under the headline "Soviet Critics of the System Must Spy for the USA," published an article which does not differ significantly from the *Nation* article. What we have before us is a typical scheme for the disinformation work of the KGB in the West . . . : a newspaper in the country of X prints disinformation which is picked up by a number of newspapers in countries Y and Z, and is then reprinted by the Soviet newspapers A and B, and so on. The "authenticity" of the disinformation grows with the quantity of published articles and the new details that appear, since each reporter adds his own. If the matter concerns dissidents, they are then arrested at some point, and articles from Western newspapers are produced in court as evidence.

It is not our job to refute the "facts" cited in the *Nation* article—the Center for Democracy will do that. But we want to note that the present international campaign launched against Yuri Yarim-Agaev, Vladimir Bukovsky, and the National Endowment for Democracy has two goals. First, . . . to convince Western publics and Western governments that the government of the USSR is carrying out democratization of its own accord, and therefore support for Soviet dissidents is no longer needed and is, in fact, harmful, since it provokes the conservative forces in the party. . . .

Second, the KGB and the Soviet government would like to get Western technology on beneficial terms without interference from critics of the system and of *perestroika*. Therefore it is important to discredit political émigrés and their organizations. The reformers in the Kremlin also have an interest in not letting official *glasnost* escape beyond the boundaries of manipulated *glasnost*, for that might turn into genuine freedom of thought and of the press. . . .

We foreign representatives of the Ukrainian Helsinki Group do not agree completely with Yarim-

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Agaev in everything, just as we do not always agree among ourselves. But . . . we would like to testify to the help given by the Center for Democracy to Ukrainian political prisoners and to the families of these prisoners. The activity of the Center is particularly important since for various reasons the usual channels of information and humanitarian aid in the U.S. and other countries are less effective in the case of the Ukraine than elsewhere.

FROM IVAN KOVALYOV and TATYANA OSIPOVA:

. . . Both of us were members of the Moscow Helsinki Group and later, as a logical consequence, became political prisoners. Yuri Yarim-Agaev was also a member of this human-rights group. . . . Since we worked together in defense of human rights, in particular gathering information on the violations of these rights, discussing, compiling, and distributing documents, we naturally came to know each other very well. One thing we knew about was Yarim-Agaev's negative attitude toward secret investigations and studies of any kind. . . .

What kind of research troubles the *Nation*? Research "into the black market, government and its administration: laws, instructions, regulations, secrecy, police, and the KGB," and so forth. Excuse us, but in which civilized country are such things considered secret? And how would the *Nation* regard a "secrecy law" in its own country?

The specific character of Soviet secrecy lies . . . in the fact that it long ago became one of the methods used by Soviet leaders in the war against their own people, a method of reprisal against dissenters, a means of concealing violations of human rights from the public in democratic countries. It was precisely on the basis of such a secret decree that Andrei Sakharov, for example, was sent into exile in Gorky without standing trial.

Any prisoner of conscience who has spent time in jail will confirm that labor-camp life is run not so much by law as by secret directives and with the complete secret powers of the KGB. The names of prisoners are secret and it is forbidden to mention them in letters; the number of prisoners is also a secret. Attempts to inform people about punishments are particularly strictly prosecuted—even if it is you yourself who are being punished. In the labor camps there is a special functionary—the censor—who checks letters for "information that should not be divulged."

Not only in camps, but outside as well, every step taken by a Soviet person is regulated, directed, and limited by a multitude of secret directives and decrees which make even those few rights he has almost nonexistent. Often this concerns an entire people—for example, the Crimean Tatars, forcibly relocated from their native land and accused without grounds of treason during the dark Stalinist period, later rehabilitated and given back their rights but still not allowed to return to their native land since a secret decree limits their registration and residency in the Crimea. We, despite threats of arrest, made this secret decree public as soon as we learned of it.

These are the kinds of secrets the Center for Democracy is unquestionably interested in, and the Soviet authorities do have something to worry about, for the secret, vile Soviet reality—which is hidden from the West—is rather different from what the *Nation* authors imagine, with their assertion that "under Gorbachev the Soviet government is beginning to get rid of its neo-Stalinist attitudes toward dissidence."

As far as the specific activities of the Center for Democracy go, we can speak of how it helped us—about the campaign in our defense which the Center carried out for many months, about how when we arrived at our place of internal exile we quickly received warm clothes, medicine, and vitamins. We could tell the editors of the *Nation* about this—if, of course, the activities of the Center truly interested them.

FROM FYODOR FINKEL:

Since 1980, I have been a member of the Council of Representatives of the Free Interprofessional Workers Union [SMOT] in the USSR, and am now one of its representatives in the West. (My family and I obtained permission from the Soviet authorities to emigrate after a forty-one-day hunger strike.)

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Before my departure, SMOT gave me the task of making known the situation of political prisoners in the USSR wherever I could, since it is only broad publicity and the concern of the entire free world with the problem of human rights in the USSR . . . which restrains the Soviet government from full-scale physical persecution.

I wish to attest to two cases, where the Center for Democracy . . . immediately—and I repeat, *immediately*—provided concrete help to real people. The first was the case of Mikhail Kazachkov, who was arrested in 1975 for his intent to emigrate and sentenced to fifteen years of strict-regimen labor camp. In 1980 he was arrested a second time while still in prison for protesting the conditions of confinement—specifically the fact that he had been illegally prevented from writing to or seeing his ailing elderly mother. . . .

It was only after the Center sent this information to Amnesty International, and asked the Committee of Concerned Scientists to intercede on behalf of their colleague (Kazachkov is a physicist whose articles have been published in the West), that Kazachkov was allowed to see his mother for the first time in many years.

The second case was that of Mikhail Kukobaka, a metal worker, arrested in 1978 and in prison to this day for having written articles expressing opinions critical of the Soviet regime. At first he was subjected to a severe beating, and last year to increased pressure demanding his "repentance," in the form of speaking out against Andrei Sakharov. Kukobaka categorically refused.

I was given this information by telephone by friends in Moscow who did not conceal their names. The only question was which organization in the United States could bring these facts to the world public as quickly as possible. The Center, despite the huge amount of work involved in checking the facts, managed to do so. Even today, political prisoners expect this from the Center, and rely on it. . . .

From Irina Grivnina:

I hold in my hands a copy of the article published in the *Nation*, and am astonished first of all at the insolence of its authors. Who gave them the right to judge my friends? Who gave them the right to speak on behalf of people who live in far-off Russia and who every day risk losing their freedom and, sometimes, even their lives? . . .

I am not a politician and, strictly speaking, I am not a "dissident." My current specialty is journalism. It was precisely for journalism—for articles on psychiatric repression in the Soviet Union—that my friends and I were arrested. This, it is true, occurred before the appearance of what is now known as *glasnost*. But who can guarantee that the brave publishers of today's uncensored journals are completely safe? The case of Paruir Airikyan [the Armenian human-rights activist arrested on March 26, 1988] has made many intelligent people think twice. Who can guarantee that he and others—such as Sergei Grigoryants, Lev Timofeev, Mustafa Dzhemilev—will not need Yuri Yarim-Agaev's help? The very same help thanks to which I am alive.

Properly speaking, of course, we were helped not only by Yuri Yarim-Agaev and Vladimir Bukovsky, but also by hundreds of people throughout the world. And I am eternally grateful to all of them. But right now we are talking in particular about the people who work at the Center for Democracy. They were the first to learn about everything that was happening to my family. They were the ones who supplied accurate and effective information to the press. And they were the ones who asked Kurt Vonnegut, Joan Baez, and Madame Mitterrand to write to the leaders of the Soviet Union.

It is thanks to the selfless work of these people that my children are alive and that they have not been separated from their parents. And it is thanks to them that we now live in Amsterdam instead of in some stinking barrack in one of the camps of the world's first workers' state. . . .

Among the hundreds of thousands of emigrants from the Soviet Union, people like Yuri Yarim-Agaev are an exceptionally rare phenomenon. . . . When I and, later on, my husband were fired from our jobs, we might simply have died of hunger were it not for the packages he sent us. In order to find out what was happening to me when I was in exile, he called every month from America to a remote village in Kazakhstan. Were it not for these phone calls . . . my younger daughter, the one on whose behalf Madame Mitterrand interceded, would simply not be alive. The KGB did everything possible in order to destroy this child even before she was born. . . .

It is a pity that duels are impossible today. They say, however, that in our times the power of the printed word has grown incredibly. One must hope that my letter will get to decent people who will find the means of explaining some simple, evident truths to the editors of the *Nation*, and to those who have so indecently joined in solidarity with them.

Possibly, they will finally understand that it is shameful to speak in the name of people who have not authorized anyone to speak in their name. They will understand that it is shameful to write denunciations which the corrupt Soviet press makes use of immediately and with great delight. It is used to trample down those very people about whose fate the journalists from the *Nation* . . . claim to be so deeply concerned.

Joshua Muravchik writes:

In their second paragraph, Katrina vanden Heuvel and Kevin Coogan accuse me of speaking in an "intemperate tone," but their standards of temperance leave me confused, since in their first paragraph they accuse me of "misrepresentation," "innuendo," "libel," and "madness."

They claim to have been motivated by "genuine concern that . . . the Center for Democracy in the USSR opens itself to accusations by the Soviet authorities that it is a tool of the American government." But it was they themselves who furnished the Soviet government with the very accusation that they claim to fear! They initiated a Freedom of Information request that turned up an old, aborted proposal that was written by one of the same exiled dissidents who subsequently founded the Center for Democracy. They then fashioned their article out of the false accusation that this old proposal aimed at "intelligence-gathering" and the additionally false accusation that the Center for Democracy was the fruit of that defunct proposal.

Having written their article, they proceeded to share advance copies of the text, and apparently other products of their Freedom of Information inquiry, with the corre spondent for *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, who was widely (and apparently accurately) accused of being a KGB

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operative. So pleased were Soviet authorities with Miss vanden Heuvel and Mr. Coogan's confected accusation that it was reprinted twice and paraphrased once, in three major Soviet publications—including *Sovietskaya Rossiya*, the famous mouthpiece of unreconstructed Stalinist opposition to Gorbachev's reforms. Once they realized that use of their galleys by *Literaturnaya Gazeta* might compromise them, they changed the ending of their piece to stress their solicitude for Soviet dissidents. I suppose they will find me intemperate again when I say that I find their protestations simply disingenuous. So, I gather, does Sergei Grigoryants and several of the Soviet dissidents whose letters are printed above.

Moreover, I must say the same about the three "items" offered in their letter. In their *Nation* article Miss vanden Heuvel and Mr. Coogan used the phrases "intelligence-gathering" and "to gather political and military information on the USSR" in reference to the defunct March 1984 proposal. In my article, I pointed out that the only conceivable justification for their terminology was the heading "The Military and Society" that appeared as one out of eleven research topics enumerated in the proposal, but that its full text and context made it clear that what was intended would in the West be considered sociological, not "military," information. (All eleven headings came after an introduction that spoke of "social, economic, and political aspects of Soviet life.") To justify the spin they put on this phrase, they would have to dispute my construction of it. Instead, they falsely insinuate that I neglected to mention it.

Second, they assert that the aborted March 1984 proposal and a later proposal for a feasibility study that eventuated in the founding of the Center for Democracy had the same "principles." The word "principles" is odd in this context, and it appears in neither proposal. I believe they employ it to obfuscate the fact that the programs envisioned in the two proposals were clearly very different. The first would have created a "Soviet Studies Research Center," the second served as a blueprint for a human-rights group, one of whose activities was to sponsor "exchanges" with "independent people" (essentially dissidents) in the Soviet Union who were barred from exchange programs sponsored by the Soviet government.

Third, Miss vanden Heuvel and Mr. Coogan claim they studied the quarterly reports of the Center for Democracy. The gist of my accusation, however, was not that they hadn't *examined* the reports of the Center's activities, but that they hadn't *cited* them. The fact that they were familiar with these reports only confirms their culpability. These reports all indicate that the Center's work had exclusively to do with human rights, not at all with "intelligence-gathering." If they had any cause to doubt the veracity of these reports, they should have cited them and then explained why they disbelieved them. Instead, they omitted any mention of the reports, giving their readers not a hint of the existence of this substantial body of evidence weighing against any charge that the Center was engaged in improper activity. Strange behavior indeed for authors who claim that their own motivation was to protect the Soviet dissidents linked to the Center.

Music in Our Time

To the Editor of Commentary:

In the concluding passages of his article on Nicolas Slonimsky, "A Failed Musical Genius" [June], Samuel Lipman says:

> Almost everywhere we look in contemporary composition—and this has been a sad fact at least since World War II—both style and content are perceived as matters of choice, as if artistic creation were no more than a matter of selecting a meal in a cafeteria, and the temple of harmony had given way to the Tower of Babel. . . . Viewed against the musical panorama of the century in which he has lived, Nicolas Slonimsky's self-confessed failure is both tragic and all too emblematic.

Yet the *truth* is that composing music is still—in the right hands—a beautiful creative process yielding results of great expressive power. Just thirty years ago Igor Stravinsky was doing extraordinary things; the music he created during the 50's and into the early 60's is absolutely breathtaking. (I wonder how many listeners realize what a miracle *Agon* is?) And around the same time, . . . we have Roger Sessions's *Third Symphony*, which takes its place within a body of orchestral music that is one of the really remarkable artistic achievements of our time.

It is true that both Sessions and Stravinsky have died, but in regard to living composers, the situation is anything but bleak. In Britain, for example, both Michael Tippett and his younger contemporary Peter Maxwell Davies are making tremendous pieces, and have been doing so for years. The real problem lies not with the musicians (remember, the great ones are comparatively few at any given time) but in the listener's capacity to become imaginatively engaged with the music itself. . . .

The "sad fact" is that Mr. Lipman, as well as other listeners, have apparently not been able to do this.

Bob Casillo
New Haven, Connecticut

Samuel Lipman writes:

Bob Casillo's letter is a curious example of blaming the victim rather than the perpetrator. Nearly fifty years have now elapsed without significant new contributions to contemporary music. Such beautiful music as has been written in this period—including the works of Shostakovich and Prokofiev in Russia, Poulenc in France, some serious followers of Arnold Schoenberg and Alban Berg, and assorted Americans—can now clearly be seen to reflect nothing later than the rich musical culture of the interwar period. As far as the post-World War II avant-garde is concerned, the so-called masterpieces of Stockhausen, Cage, Boulez, and Berio (to name only four of the most prestigious), have utterly failed to gain the love, not just of "listeners," as Mr. Casillo would have it, but of the overwhelming majority of deeply serious and highly talented musicians.

Mr. Casillo mentions, by way of demonstrating the power of recent music, the late works of Stravinsky and the music of Michael Tippett, Peter Maxwell Davies, and Roger Sessions. Whatever the permanent value of these compositions—I personally find late Stravinsky dry, Davies rebarbative, and Tippett and Sessions fascinating and worthwhile, though sadly unlikely ever to win a sizable following—Mr. Casillo's limited and problematic examples only underscore the wider musical failure in our time, not of listeners, but of composers.

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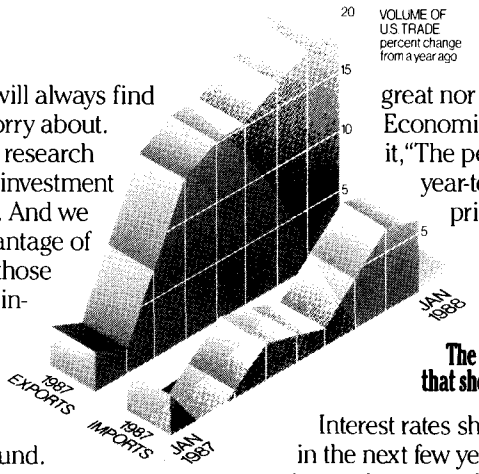
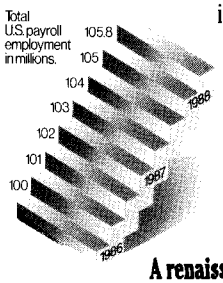
With so many things to worry about why are we so optimistic?

Those inclined to worry will always find things in the economy to worry about. But the fact is, Merrill Lynch research shows that many untapped investment opportunities are unfolding. And we believe the time to take advantage of them has arrived. Here are those trends. And what the astute investor can do about them.



Economic forecast: up, down, then up again.

The basic economy is sound. Personal income has been rising steadily for the last few years. The unemployment rate is near a 9-year low, and the gross national product is advancing at a healthy pace. While our research shows the possibility of a recession next year, it should be modest in length and degree. And economic growth should resume by the end of 1989.



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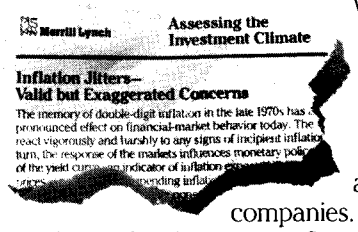
The American economy is undergoing a major change: the Industrial Renaissance. Exports are growing strongly. That means a rise in orders for American capital goods and an excellent long-term opportunity to profit from the rebuilding of our industrial base.


Merrill Lynch
Assessing the Investment Climate
Inflation Jitters—Valid but Exaggerated Concerns
The memory of double-digit inflation in the late 1970s has pronounced effect on financial-market behavior today. The react vigorously and harshly to any signs of incipient inflatio turn, the response of the markets influences monetary poli of the yield curve as an indicator of inflation

We also see emerging opportunities in selected high-yielding stocks such as those of utilities and insurance companies. And, as Merrill Lynch Chief Investment Strategist Charles I. Clough points out, "Foreign investment flows into dollar-denominated financial assets are likely to be increasingly supportive of the U.S. financial markets."

Inflation is up. But not severely.

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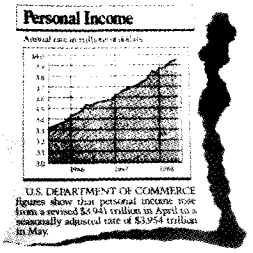
The interest rate outlook: something that should make everyone feel optimistic.

Interest rates should decline substantially in the next few years. This would be spurred by moderating inflation, slower economic growth in 1989, and a rising surplus in the Social Security trust fund, which will make the government a bigger customer for its own debt, reducing the amount it must raise from the public.

This means that U.S. Treasury bonds and high-quality corporate and municipal bonds—which are now paying healthy interest rates—are also likely to increase considerably in value.


Personal Income
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Is There Still a Soviet Threat?

Angelo M. Codevilla

On the campaign trail this fall, George Bush observed that as the result of policies pursued by the Reagan administration, "Peace is breaking out all over." He is not alone in this assessment, which is hardly limited to Republicans. According to Harold Brown, who served as Secretary of Defense in the Carter administration, the policy of "containment of the Soviet Union," originally devised by Democrats, "has succeeded."

Among policy intellectuals, too, there is a general consensus: although few may go so far as Stanley Hoffmann in proclaiming that in recent years the world has learned the inutility of force, many do believe (as Robert Scheer has written) that the Soviet Union has largely abandoned its side of the global tug-of-war and left the U.S. with a limp rope and an embarrassment of peace. Even the foreign-policy establishment's more sober wing appears to believe that, with the luxury of a reduced military-political threat, we can now concentrate on economic competition from Japan, Europe, and the newly industrialized nations of East Asia. As a piece in the *Wall Street Journal* put it, "After more than forty years of containing an enemy, the next administration faces the challenge of drawing up a security policy directed more at shared leadership in a world of powerful friends."

The case for the proposition that "peace is breaking out all over" rests, at best, on American hopes attached to Soviet actions. And there are indeed a few Soviet actions that may (or may not) be part of trends that may (or may not) lead to real peace in the long run: for example, some Soviet troops have left Afghanistan. The case also rests on American interpretations of the general Soviet situation, especially the economic situation, which, it is believed, should force profound changes in the direction of disarmament and peace. Finally, the case rests on American hopes attached to Soviet words—in particular on what Soviet officials say about a new defensive emphasis in Soviet military doctrine and about a total pullback in Angola and Nicaragua.

The now highly unfashionable case to the contrary—that the Soviet Union is as much of a threat as ever, maybe more—is based on a different set of assessments: Soviet military power *relative to that of the United States* continues to grow, while Soviet efforts to cushion the consequences of military spending by acquiring Western capital and technology are more successful now than they have been in many years.

The contest between these views is of the greatest significance for U.S. policy in the years ahead, regardless of which party controls the White House or the Congress. Shall we continue to cut our military budget in real terms, as (contrary to what many people imagine) we have done every year since 1985; or shall we spend whatever is needed to deter a war by preparing to fight, survive, and win one if it should nevertheless break out? Shall we help to finance and build up the Soviet economy; or shall we work to cut off its access to Western credits and expertise? Shall we help those who are fighting Soviet and Soviet-supported regimes, from Angola to Nicaragua to Poland; or shall we advise them to work as best they can within a Soviet empire that may be evolving in a good direction?

Another consideration is even more important. Ever since the Founding, we Americans have defined ourselves in opposition to tyranny. Since World War II, the ongoing need to counter the Soviet Union has served to remind us that the United States of America is not just another nation among nations but a beacon and a help to free men everywhere. Are we going to live by, or put aside, the concerns with political, personal, and religious liberty that the struggle against Soviet Communism has energized among us? A host of commitments, including our geopolitical relationship with Europe and Japan, make sense only in the context of opposition to Soviet Communism. Have they become obsolete?

In truth, much of the controversy in this country over what is and is not happening in the Soviet Union is really about what directions American policy should take. The focus is less on ascertain-

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ing Soviet reality than on vindicating one or another side in an intramural American quarrel. This sort of solipsism is unfortunate, because the extent to which the Soviet Union actually threatens us makes a big difference. It would be worse than wasteful to base our policy on opposition to the Soviet Union if that country were on its way to a true political transformation. But if that is not the case, we would by the same token be criminally foolish to repeat our mistakes of the 1970's (a succinct summary of which was offered at the time by Harold Brown: "When we stop, they build"). A serious, prudent evaluation of the Soviet threat must begin by eschewing the temptation to treat our own hopes or fears about the future as if they were an incontestable reality.

It is indeed an incontestable reality that many hope-inspiring words are coming out of the Soviet Union, and even a few correlative actions. But it is also true that the mass of Soviet deeds are not such as to inspire rational hope.

Consider the military balance. If the Soviets were becoming our partners in security, military capacity would not matter. But Soviet thaws can turn to frosts as quickly as smiles can change to frowns, and far more quickly than missiles and anti-missile devices can be built. Moreover, military opportunities have been known to tempt men less inured to violence than the current crop of Soviet leaders. Hence it is important to note that the military balance is continuing its long-term shift in the Soviet Union's favor, and that recent American cutbacks are accelerating that trend.

Contrary to widespread belief, the U.S. has not become militarily stronger over the past decade *relative to the Soviet Union*. True, during the early Reagan years the American military waxed. As a result, our Navy is now substantially bigger and much improved. The Army, while shrinking a bit, has largely switched to a new generation of tanks and attack helicopters. U.S. fighter-bombers, though fewer, are better than they were. As for American strategic forces, they have benefited from the addition of 99 new B-1 bombers, the loading of air-launched cruise missiles on old B-52s, and the much-delayed arrival of a small fleet of 50 new MX missiles. Finally, electronic command links have also been much improved.

Overall, then, our forces are stronger than they were ten years ago. Yet this is quite irrelevant, since the only comparison that matters is between U.S. and Soviet forces. Here, *all* the tangible evidence says that we are much worse off than before.

The latest edition of the Secretary of Defense's annual report to Congress tells the tale. Over the past decade, the U.S. has produced 7,600 tanks to the Soviet Union's 25,300. In the current fiscal year we are going to produce only about 600, versus about 2,500 for the Soviets. With regard to artillery pieces, the figures are 3,200 for us and 27,300 for them. We do better with fighter planes and fighter-bombers, where we are down only 2 to 1 (3,600 to 7,700). But where nuclear-capable artillery and rocket launchers are concerned, we do worse: there the ratio is 17 to 1 against us.

The days are long gone when we could discount such figures by referring to Soviet technical backwardness. The equipment coming off Soviet production lines today is roughly as good as our best. Often, especially in infantry fighting vehicles, it is superior. And in the field of defense against aircraft, cruise missiles, and ballistic missiles, the Soviets have equipment the likes of which we simply do not possess.

Even in the one area of clear American superiority—the open-ocean Navy—the Soviets have made intelligent use of their peculiar assets substantially to reduce our advantage. Although the Soviet Navy is not equipped to contest the mid-Pacific or any part of the Atlantic except for the northeast, its swarms of shore-based naval bombers and numerically superior submarines have made the seas around the Soviet Union into secure bastions. These bastions, the Secretary of Defense acknowledges, are being spread into the sea lanes that link North America with Europe and Japan. In the Mediterranean, too, the Soviet Navy is moving forward, not backward, with an expansion of its base in Syria.

To be sure, the Secretary of Defense qualifies this objectively gloomy picture with the subjective caveat that intangible edges in American "operational planning, leadership, training, and morale" offset tangible Soviet leads. Such words are less expensive than tanks or planes. But they also count for less.

Concerning intercontinental missiles and bombers, where subjective factors do not apply, it is much more difficult to slight the numbers. This is perhaps why the Secretary's report does not mention that whereas a decade ago the Soviets had only about 4,000 warheads with the necessary combination of nuclear yield and accuracy to destroy America's own strategic forces, today they have about 6,500. Thus, we have gone from roughly two Soviet ICBM warheads per American missile silo, bomber base, command-and-control center, and submarine port, to roughly three nuclear warheads pointed at each of these American targets.

On our side, with the arrival of the MX, the number of warheads capable of attacking Soviet strategic forces with the same degree of confidence with which the Soviets can attack ours has gone from zero to 500. But this is still only about one for every eight Soviet missile silos, submarine pens, command-and-control bunkers, etc.

Even these figures understate the weakness of our position. A decade ago, the Soviet Union's ICBMs were in fixed silos. The then-Secretary of Defense, Harold Brown, thought it necessary to acquire 200 *mobile* MX missiles, most of whose 2,000 warheads would survive a Soviet attack and threaten the

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Soviet missile silos that were being held in reserve. This was the heart of the Carter administration's strategy. But it is now far beyond our means. Today, not only are we unlikely to get more than 50 MXs, and not only are they in fixed, vulnerable locations, but the Soviet Union has taken a giant step toward making even these irrelevant by putting its newest ICBMs on rail cars and in trucks. In other words, they have moved one lap ahead. Moreover, the newest Soviet command bunkers are so deep as to be out of reach of any and all nuclear weapons.

How does Frank Carlucci, the current Secretary of Defense, deal with such facts? Our strategy, he says, is "to hold at risk those assets that the Soviets value most." But those assets—their strategic forces and command apparatus—are precisely the ones we are *unable* to hold at risk. In fact, the only targets we can still confidently hold at risk are the civilians and the industries that the Soviet government has not chosen to protect. Yet as the Secretary's report also acknowledges, the Soviets "are continuing their enormous investment in expensive and technically demanding active and passive defense systems designed to limit damage to the USSR in the event of war." These include "industrial preparations for nuclear war," a massive shelter program, a pervasive air defense, and full production of every part of a comprehensive anti-missile system—all on the back of a "strapped" economy. Thus, little by little, not only the military but even the civilian sectors of the Soviet Union need fear us less and less.

The Secretary concludes that, "left unchallenged, these trends will, over time, remove from risk an increasing portion of those [strategic and command] assets which the Soviets consider vital in retaining control over their society and achieving their wartime goals." Are we challenging these trends? No. Although the MX "begins to redress the existing asymmetry in prompt, hard-target kill capability," there are, as we have seen, no U.S. plans to go beyond token numbers of MXs and no plans to give the MX mobility comparable to its Soviet counterpart, the SS-24.

The Secretary says that in the 1990's the new Trident II submarine-launched missiles "will permit us to hold at risk a greater proportion of the *hardened, fixed* Soviet target base" (emphasis added). That is literally true—except that such coverage will not be anything like the coverage which the Soviets have of our targets. Moreover, the hardened, fixed target base vulnerable to U.S. retaliation is vanishing, and by the 1990's substantially all Soviet strategic-force reserves will be mobile; the key parts of the mechanism for control of Soviet society will be out of reach; and Soviet anti-missile defenses will be in place.

So far, the only actual (rather than rhetorical) initiative by the U.S. government to change this situation has been to pursue the series of arms-control agreements which Mikhail Gorbachev proposed at the Reykjavik summit of 1986: a 50-percent reduction in each side's long-range nuclear warheads, and adherence to the ABM treaty for at least ten years.

The first problem here is that such a reduction would further increase the ratio of Soviet warheads to American strategic targets. Moreover, while the U.S. has interpreted the ABM treaty as a prohibition against producing anti-missile devices, the Soviet Union has not.

Second, while the U.S. has charged that the Soviet Union has violated and circumvented every arms-control agreement it has ever signed, we have neither compelled the Soviets to undo the gains they have made thereby, nor have we matched or offset those gains by new armament programs of our own. Instead, in the words of Kenneth Adelman, the former director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, having received rotten oranges from the store, we have gone back to the same store for more oranges.

Suppose that the U.S. were to obtain an arms-control agreement from the Soviet Union that would "fix" every one of the looming strategic problems I have mentioned. Any Soviet official who suggested that the USSR abide by it would be derelict in his duty to his country. That is because the U.S. has granted the USSR a license to have its arms-control cake while eating it too, and no American has suggested any way of revoking that license. No, arms control is not a solution. It is part of the problem.

How about an American anti-missile defense? Such a thing could really complicate (and hence discourage) a Soviet attack and protect American society from the collateral damage therefrom. If it were in place, we could afford some complacency about the ratio of offensive warheads to strategic targets. In a crisis, we might even reasonably ignore Soviet threats. But no one seriously believes that the U.S. government has decided to build—as opposed to studying *ad infinitum*—an anti-missile defense. The unadorned reality is that we are content to watch the Soviet Union widen the margin by which it can safely use—or threaten to use—strategic weapons against us.

What will the Soviets do with this margin, and at what point might they be tempted to use it? Whatever and whenever they, not we, think best. Who will stop them? How? Alas, U.S. military planning has no answer to such questions.

One of the uses of superiority at the highest level of military operations is to cover military operations or threats at lower levels.

Consider Europe, where some 300,000 U.S. troops are stationed. These represent the bulk of our ground and air-force operational units. Estimates vary, but we spend somewhat over half our military budget on the defense of Europe. The

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expense notwithstanding, however, the official U.S. judgment is that whereas a decade ago NATO ground forces were inferior to the Warsaw Pact by an overall ratio of 1.5 to 1, today the ratio of ready forces is roughly 2 to 1 against NATO, and almost 3 to 1 against us one month after mobilization. NATO's disadvantage in the air is perhaps only 1.3 to 1. But Soviet overall superiority on the central front is at least 3 to 1. (Actually, the raw figures are worse than these summary final assessments because the usual "intangibles" are thrown into the balance on the U.S. side.)

The Secretary of Defense concedes that the U.S. has "not been able to calculate adequately" what effects a Soviet combined-arms attack on Europe would have, and that the Soviet Union has reason to believe that it could conquer NATO quickly. Nevertheless, he concludes that "the Soviets may not be confident that their forces are sufficient to guarantee them a high probability of success." Why? Because of "capabilities NATO is pursuing" (but does not have).

The Secretary's report mentions something called "competitive strategies," one of the Pentagon's latest buzz words. This term is a label that the Pentagon has chosen to pin on some of its longstanding programs and on "efforts under way to identify possible actions we can take." "Competitive strategies" looks good in budget battles, but it takes a lot of effort to imagine the Soviets cringing.

Meanwhile, as Europe looks East it sees a Red Army with more divisions in East Germany than are in the entire active U.S. Army, and more divisions in Czechoslovakia than there are U.S. divisions in all of Europe. All of these Soviet divisions have forward-deployed mobile bridging equipment that is useful only for offense.

Under Gorbachev, not one of these divisions has been eliminated or even neglected. All continue to be improved.

How then is NATO to be saved from the fate that history normally reserves for the militarily inferior? For a generation the answer was that the threat of intervention by America's nuclear forces would deter the Soviet Union from taking advantage of its local superiority. But in 1988 the U.S. Secretary of Defense has acknowledged for the first time what has been clear for years: because the strategic balance has moved, and continues to move, in the Soviets' direction, Europeans should not count "too heavily" on U.S. strategic forces intervening to save NATO from its insufficiences. It would be a wonder if Europeans did not adjust themselves to this changing balance. Despite brave words about their confidence in a peaceful future, Europeans, especially Germans, are in fact modifying their attitudes about the world to reflect Soviet military power. In a crisis, they can be expected to modify yet further.

EUROPE'S situation is more typical than atypical of the rest of the world.

A prime example is East Asia. It extends from the Indian Ocean to the Bering Straits. It is next door to the Soviet Union and half a world away from us. It is the most economically vibrant area on the globe, but surely the area least defended by native forces.

The Japanese, Thais, Filipinos, Koreans, Malaysians, Taiwanese, etc., have developed the habit of relying on the U.S. Seventh Fleet for their protection and for the protection of the sea routes through which they receive their raw materials and ship their products. This arrangement made sense until about a decade ago, as long as Soviet power in the Pacific was minimal. But in 1975 the Soviet Union took over Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam from the U.S., and expanded it into one of the world's largest naval bases. Submarines, aircraft, and cruisers operating from there can bid for control of Asia's oil routes. If the U.S. is forced to vacate Clark Field and Subic Bay two years hence, as Philippine President Aquino seems to have pledged, the Soviet Navy will clearly have the upper hand around the Straits of Malacca.

This is not to say that the Soviet Navy will be able to sally forth from Cam Ranh Bay and beat the U.S. in a mid-Pacific battle. But the Soviets will certainly be in a position to deny transit along the oil routes to anyone—including the once-mighty Seventh Fleet. To ask the people of East Asia not to heed the new masters of their lifelines is to ask too much.

A similar situation exits 4,000 miles to the north. The Soviet fleet operating out of Vladivostok and Petropavlovsk could not stage a landing in Hawaii, but it could prevent American reinforcements from reaching Japan. The Japanese have accepted responsibility for keeping open the sea routes 1,000 miles out from the home islands; but no one contends that they are equipped to do that. Perhaps that is why Japan is now the Soviet Union's leading supplier of cash credits. As the military situation in the North Pacific continues to move in the Soviet Union's favor, the price of its favors is likely to increase.

As if these developments were not ominous enough, during the 1970's the United States bet the entire military situation in the region on one simple proposition—that, as the current report of the Secretary of Defense restates it, "China is a friend." But this proposition—which has served to rationalize the general drawdown of American forces in the Pacific, and our actual discouragement of Taiwan's and South Korea's desire to defend themselves—is mistaken. China is nobody's friend. Despite its enmity toward the Soviet Union, it is much too weak to play the role of military counterweight that U.S. strategists have assigned to it. Nor will it be stronger in the foreseeable future. In a crunch, China will avoid trouble by

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accommodating the one power that is both willing and able to do it serious harm: the Soviet Union.

IN LIGHT of all these facts concerning the East-West military balance, the Soviet Union's claim that it has a brand-new, defensive doctrine rings hollow. As anyone knows who has followed the Soviet military over the years, the Soviet Union has *always* proclaimed that its operational doctrine is strictly defensive. The words of the current leadership on this subject are no different from those of its predecessors; the difference lies in the willingness of Westerners to accept them, a willingness that comes, significantly, at a moment when Soviet offensive capacity has never been higher, and when the numbers of tanks, planes, missiles, and so forth emerging from Soviet factories are steady at levels several times our own. The effort may be breaking the Soviet Union economically, but it is not broken yet. And, as Gorbachev's words help cut down the U.S. military, they raise the marginal efficiency of every Soviet military ruble.

Indeed, Gorbachev's foremost political act has been to disarm (in every sense) the U.S. As he himself explained on the 70th anniversary of the October revolution, "Our *perestroika* . . . is eliminating the fear of the 'Soviet threat,' with [American] militarism losing its political justification." Georgi Arbatov has been even more specific: "Without this bugaboo [of the Soviet threat], the $300-billion-per-year American military presence in the Atlantic, Pacific, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean, and Near East would be meaningless. Take away the 'Soviet threat' and this entire costly edifice will crumble like a house of cards." The Soviet magazine *New Times* has described *glasnost* and *perestroika* as "marvelous keys to American hearts."

If Soviet leaders were removing the *substance* of their threat to the rest of the world, and then simply reporting, say, that Warsaw Pact military production had dropped to NATO levels, that would be one thing. But this is not what they are doing. Rather than cutting their own military production in reality, they are attempting to do away with the reality of *American* military forces by convincing American leaders to accept a certain image of the "Soviet threat." *Glasnost* and *perestroika* have certainly resulted in disarmament—but of the U.S., not of the Soviet Union. There is no reason to confuse what is, after all, a traditional "peace offensive" with peace itself.

The Soviet Union makes no secret that its policies are aimed at, among other things, attracting Western capital and technology. In 1986, as *glasnost* was beginning to have its effect on the West, the Soviets were able to secure $30 billion in loans from private Western sources, partly in the form of deposits in Soviet-owned banks in the West. This amount was about equal to the Soviet Union's hard-currency earnings from all sources. Since these loans were not tied to any specific project, they were effectively blank checks to cover the Soviet Union's subsidies to its empire, and to purchase Western technology. The total is rising, and there is even talk of floating "Gorbybonds" to finance whatever the General Secretary wants to do.

Here we come to the heart of the issue of the Soviet threat, for to many people, money is the bottom line. In the early 1970's, the Nixon-Kissinger policy of détente was justified in part by an intellectual framework according to which a Soviet Union pumped up by Western money and technology would offer less of a threat to the world. But then the Soviets used the technology bought with Western money to build SS-18 missiles which posed strategic problems we have yet to resolve, and to help conquer a host of countries. Hence no one appeals to the old arguments to justify today's transfer of resources; instead, we hear the nebulous claim that the West has an interest in the outcome of *perestroika*.

Indeed we do. A Soviet Union governed by traditional Russian conservatives (*à la* Solzhenitsyn) or by Western-type liberals (*à la* Sakharov) or by inward-looking Communists (as in Yugoslavia) would be a pleasant problem to have. But there is no evidence whatsoever that by helping Gorbachev economically we will bring about such changes, any more than we did by helping Stalin who, in his time, was the repository of American hopes even more grand than those visited on his latest successor.

This is not the place for a discussion of internal Soviet politics, but we must keep in mind that the Soviet system is peculiarly stacked against a peaceful evolution to either traditional Russian conservatism or Western-type liberalism. *Perestroika* and *glasnost* seem to be stimulating anyone who has both a following and a grievance to assert himself, yet none of the people doing so is a moderate in the Western mold. And in the meantime, the food lines are lengthening.

In such a volatile situation, various kinds of violent struggles are likely to break out, followed by the victory of one faction and then a crackdown on the others. We can dream, if we care to, that when the smoke clears the "leader" will suppress his own faction's interests as well as the others', blame all the country's sufferings on his own people, exonerate the "imperialists" who have been every faction's whipping boy for three generations, ignore the massive military power at his command, and be nice to the wealthy and underarmed West. But we dare not stake our future on it. If Gorbachev himself were the winner, how would he and his band act once they had caused the "house of cards" of Western defense to come tumbling down or at least to suffer from neglect? Is there anything in their background to suggest they would hesitate to raise the price of their forbearance in order to pay off their supporters and

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avoid another round of unsettling domestic reforms?

For us, faced with such uncertainties, the prudent course is to pay the hardest attention to the hardest facts. Secretary of Defense Carlucci recently reiterated that Soviet words about a reduced military threat are entirely belied by Soviet deeds. Carlucci's point is clear enough: keep your powder dry. But although he makes a convincing case that the Soviets are lying, and in ways calculated to increase the danger we are in, the administration he has served does not act as if we were being bilked. Instead, pouring cold water on the "powder" of public opinion, it praises the Soviets for relative candor, and looks forward to putting them to the test.

Thus, too, Michael Dukakis, in his principal campaign statement on U.S.-Soviet relations, spoke of putting Gorbachev to five tests, including destruction of the Soviet military edge in Europe. But what reason do Americans of any political persuasion, or Soviets for that matter, have to believe that Soviet failure to pass such "tests" would be followed by anything other than efforts to explain that underlying conditions are propitious for yet another series of tests?

This sort of split thinking seems to be the bipartisan order of the day in the U.S. foreign-policy establishment, and it raises the troubling thought that the real Soviet threat consists less of tanks, missiles, or "active measures" than it does of periodic epidemics of American unseriousness.

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Evolution and the Bible

Genesis 1 Revisited

Leon R. Kass

WESTERN civilization would not be Western civilization were it not for biblical religion, which reveres and trusts in the one God, Who has made known what He wants of human beings through what is called His revelation, i.e., through Scripture. Western civilization would not be Western civilization were it not also for science, which extols and trusts in human reason to disclose the workings of nature and to use the knowledge gained to improve human life. These twin sources of Western civilization—religion and science (or, before it, philosophy), divine revelation and human reason—are, to say the least, not easily harmonized. One might even say that Western civilization would not be Western civilization without the continuing dialectical tension between the claims of biblical religion and the cultivation of autonomous human reason.

These tensions between science and religion, never absent yet recently grown strong, nowadays focus mainly on the subject of evolution and its meaning for the Bible. This is, of course, an old story: ever since the publication of *The Origin of Species* in 1859, Darwinism's challenge to the doctrine of creation outlined in Genesis has been advanced, countered, and argued in many arenas. In Darwin's own introduction to that book, the alternatives regarding the origin of species were starkly posed: either descent with modification, mainly through natural selection, or design by the Creator. One might have thought that over a hundred years of discussion, in the face of massive evidence to support the thesis of evolution, would have settled matters—or at least left the disputers with little new to say. Yet, today, the controversy is perhaps more heated than ever, not only among scholars, but also in the political arena.

There are, to be sure, people who see no difficulty. Some practicing biologists—even evolutionary biologists—continue to profess themselves believing Christians or Jews; they reconcile the seemingly opposed teachings of Darwinism and the Bible by regarding the early chapters in Genesis as metaphorical or by holding that God could create equally well through the evolutionary process (though some also rejoice in the "big-bang" theory of cosmic origins, which they associate with instantaneous creation *ex nihilo*).

But most people tend to see the first chapters of Genesis and the theory of evolution as irreconcilable. On one side, we have scientists and philosophers of science who hold that the teaching of evolution has made "plumb unbelievable" the teachings of the book of Genesis, especially about the special status of man: "[I]t is obviously impossible to square any evolutionary account of the origin of species with a substantially literal reading of the first chapters of Genesis."* On the other side, we have Protestant fundamentalists, who, taking the same view of the challenge, declare the teachings of evolution to be false. No longer content just citing chapter and verse, some of them would like to prove it scientifically. In recent decades, they have given birth to a new movement, so-called "creation science" or "scientific creationism," which aims both to embarrass and refute the theory of evolution and to find scientific evidence supporting the account of the origins of the world, life, and man provided by their own particular reading of Scripture.

I should say straight out that I reject the enterprise of "creation science." There is simply no way scientifically to gather the kind of evidence wanted, and the quality of reasoning in the few publications I have seen is appalling. True, certain discoveries may yet raise difficulties for the orthodox theory of the *how* of evolution, inducing much-needed modesty and open-mindedness among the high priests of science. But such difficulties could hardly challenge the basic *fact* that

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* Antony Flew, "The Philosophical Implications of Darwinism," in *Darwin, Marx, Freud*, Arthur Caplan and Bruce Jennings, eds. (Plenum Press, 1984), pp. 3-33. See also my critical response, "Darwinism and Ethics: A Response to Antony Flew," in the same volume, pp. 47-69, especially the section on "Darwinism and the Bible."

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evolution has occurred, much less constitute evidence for special creation less than 6,000 years ago. If the Bible is to be harmonized with scientific findings, creation science is not the way.

I would, however, offer two faint defenses for the creation scientists and their fundamentalist supporters, despite my wholesale rejection of their ways and goals. First, they are properly dissatisfied with a scientific explanation of the universe that, quite deliberately, refuses to consider the *ultimate* sources and origins of things; they are dissatisfied with a science that contents itself with describing the processes of change while ridiculing the quest for *causal* explanations, dismissed contemptuously as a matter for metaphysics. The inquiring mind is not content with knowing "how"; it wants also to know "why." To answer confidently that "chance is responsible" is merely to confess our ignorance.

Second, the creationists and their fundamentalist patrons correctly discern what is humanly and morally at stake in this controversy. They sense that orthodox evolutionary theory cannot support any notions we might have regarding human dignity or man's special place in the whole. And they see that Western moral teaching, so closely tied to Scripture, is also in peril if any major part of Scripture can be shown to be false.

In short, both metaphysically and morally, the stakes are high—and the fundamentalists, unlike many scientists, seem to know it, to their credit.

What is a thoughtful person to think? Can we continue to hold together evolution and the Bible without self-deception? Adequately to answer this question, one would need to consider thoroughly each of the teachings, first in its own terms and then in relation to the other. This task is beyond my powers. But perhaps I can contribute to our ongoing reflection by doing what is, alas, too little done in these discussions—namely, taking a close look at the text of the beginning of Genesis. Let us put aside what we have heard about this story, whether from Milton's poem or Blake's drawings, whether from deconstructionist professors or Jerry Falwell's sermons, and let us attempt a truly literal reading of Chapter 1 of Genesis: first, to see what it actually says and means; second, to see what sort of text it is; and third, to see whether it is the sort of text and says the sort of things that can be contradicted and disproved by science.

Before proceeding to Genesis, a brief word on the theory of evolution, whose general teachings are, I shall assume, familiar. It is important to distinguish two aspects, the *what* and the *how*. The *what* of evolution is the doctrine of transformation of species: species are not fixed or specially created; rather, they descend with modification from previously existing, different species. Darwin was not the first to teach transformation of species; he was the first (along with A. R. Wallace) to teach the current view about the *how* of evolution, the means whereby species change: natural selection. Genetic variations (i.e., mutations) arise, conferring on their possessors either a slight advantage or a slight disadvantage in the struggle for life and the competition to generate offspring; the survival and reproduction of those more fit is called natural selection, the fact of greater fitness being inferred retroactively from the one successful result, namely, the greater number of surviving progeny.

I should make it plain from the start that I am convinced that evolution has occurred, but I am doubtful whether its most *important* features are *sufficiently* explained solely by the mechanism of natural selection.

I. At First Glance: The Cast of Creatures (in order of appearance)

"IN BEGINNING, God created the heavens and the earth."*

The first sentence of Genesis majestically summarizes the entire story and states its main theme and thesis: *creation,* by God, and creation by *God.* The heavens and the earth, the high and the low, were *created* and created by God. Needless to say, this verse is hard to understand: in beginning of what? What is "creating"? And who or what is this creating being, God? To some of these difficulties—especially, creation—we shall return. But for the present, we note that the assertion "creation by God" emphatically denies important competing alternatives. In its beginning, Genesis denies the eternity of the visible universe and, *a fortiori,* its divinity: the heavens—sun, moon, stars—and the earth are not gods, but creatures. And, in promulgating creation, Genesis denies the alternative of generative beginnings: the sky did not beget upon the earth; our world is not the result of sexual (or warring) activities of gods and goddesses.

One cannot exaggerate the importance the Bible attaches to rejecting these alternatives. Curiously, these alternatives are rejected also by the theory of evolution (and modern cosmology): the cosmos is not eternal; the sun is not a god—and neither is the cosmos; the coming-to-be of the universe is not by sexual generation. Whatever their differences on "creation," Genesis and modern science agree on these most significant matters.

The second verse is even more mysterious than the first: "And the earth was unformed and void and darkness [was] over the face of the deep, and the spirit of God hovered over the face of the waters."

Apparently describing the situation before the first creative act, this verse focuses on a primordial "earth"—to be distinguished from the "Earth" that is the dry land, and that appears later on Day Three—above which was the spirit (*ru'akh*: literally, wind or breath) of God. The primordial earth

* The translations here and throughout are my own—L.K.

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was, to begin with, watery, formless, chaotic, mobile but non-living, undifferentiated stuff; out of this, everything (or nearly everything) else will come to be, through a process of demarcation, distinction, separation. God, the separator and distinguisher, appears Himself to be separate from the watery stuff. But the origin of the primordial chaos is absolutely unclear; there is no explicit assertion of its creation out of nothing. The *ultimate* beginnings—and even the *status quo ante* God's creative acts—are shrouded in mystery. About this, too, modern cosmology cannot help but agree: "What was there before the big bang?" "God only knows."

Happily, the intelligibility of the account improves in the sequel, once we are introduced to the cast of particular creatures, beginning with light and ending with man. Here they are, in their familiar order of appearance:

Day One: Light, and the separation of light and dark, named Day and Night.

Day Two: The firmament, that vault of the sky, named Heavens, which separates the waters above and the waters below.

Day Three: (a) The separation of gathered terrestrial waters from the emerging dry land, respectively named Seas and Earth; and (b) Vegetation—grass, herbs, and trees, each after its kind—put forth by the Earth.

Day Four: The lights in the Heavens—the greater, the lesser, and the stars.

Day Five: The fish of the sea and the birds of the open sky, after their kinds.

Day Six: (a) The terrestrial animals, after their kinds; and (b) Man, made in God's image, male and female.

The account, though comprehensive, has an earth-centered focus. Though it speaks about what we call, in non-biblical language, the universe or the cosmos, it addresses *us*, as terrestrial beings, looking around and about and, especially, up. All the beings mentioned are known to us in ordinary experience: there are no mythical beasts and no gods and goddesses; the main regions of our world are present—land, sea, and air—with their appropriate inhabitants, divided into recognizable kinds or species. And the overarching, star-studded, watery-blue vault of heaven that beckons our gaze is present almost from the start, preceded only by light, in the absence of which nothing at all could be distinguished or gazed upon. By addressing human beings exactly as *they* experience the world, especially through sight, Genesis begins with what is both familiar and first for us, and for all mankind at all times. (The same cannot be said for modern science.*)

But while addressed to our experience, the account of Genesis 1 does not simply accord with our experience; indeed, some of the peculiarities of the account induce perplexities about the way we ordinarily encounter the world.

First, there are peculiarities related to time: the creatures do not just come in order, they come sharply separated in a day-by-day sequence. As early as the Middle Ages, well before the modern theory of evolution, Christian scholars debated whether creation was largely instantaneous or whether it was gradual; in this debate, everything depends on the nature and meaning of time—a subject that we shall, mercifully, not entangle ourselves with. But our ordinarily sure sense of temporality is called into question by this simple fact: we have day and night, and the marking of what appears to be time, on Day One, before we have the sun, which is created only on Day Four. The traditional explanation, that creation days are not solar days, merely avoids the difficulty, and prevents us from recognizing the dangers of trusting too much our notions of temporality.

The order of creatures poses other challenges to our ordinary perceptions of things: there is light in the absence of the sun or of any light-giving heavenly bodies; and there is terrestrial vegetation (Day Three) before the sun (Day Four). In short, though all the beings are familiar, the *order* of their appearance does not square perfectly with facts of ordinary experience—to say nothing of modern scientific accounts of cosmogony.

What are we to make of these difficulties? We could try to rationalize them away: for example, we know at least one source of light that does not require a luminous body, namely, lightning (though it does require clouds, earth, etc.); also, the appearance of plants with the earth and before the sun might be due to the fact that the earth-bound and earth-borne character of vegetation is more impressive to the naive observer than is its dependence on sunlight. But what if these incongruities should *not* be rationalized away? What if they were *intentionally* arranged incongruously, out of the expected order? What if the text intends, in this way, to challenge, or at least correct, certain aspects of our naive, untutored perception of our world?

This suggestion gains force when we notice that the sun is the common feature of all the peculiarities: light without the sun, days or time without the sun, earth and vegetation without the sun. In keeping with its rejection of the belief in cosmic gods, Genesis depreciates the importance of *the* primary being in the world of our common experience, the sun, source of light, warmth, and sustenance.

This striking demotion of the status of the sun leads us to suspect that the author of Genesis is

* For an exploration of the "unnatural" character of modern natural science, see my *Toward a More Natural Science: Biology and Human Affairs* (Free Press, 1985), especially Chapter 13, "Looking Good: Nature and Nobility."

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engaged in teaching something other than what came first and what came next, that the sequence of creatures may not be mainly or primarily an effort to tell a *historical* or temporal story. Rather, the apparently temporal order could be an image for the ontological order; the temporal sequence of comings-into-being could be a vivid means of conveying the *hierarchic* order of the beings-that-have-come-to-be-and-*are*. We need a second, and different, kind of look at the biblical sequence.*

II. Looking With the Mind's Eye: Intelligible Hierarchy

We begin our second glance at the order of creatures with the following observation: the six days of creation are organized quite clearly into two *parallel* groups of three: Days One to Three, and Days Four to Six. Day One brings light, Day Four the heavenly lights; Day Two, heaven, separating waters above from the waters below, Day Five the living creatures—fish and fowl—that live in the waters below and that fly before heaven. Days Three and Six have, in parallel, double creations, giving them preeminence in their respective triads. Day Three: first, the earth or dry land, and second, the plants, put forth by earth. Day Six: first, the land animals, second, man.

This observation prepares the next, which is that the second three days bring creatures that all have locomotion: the heavenly bodies, the fish and fowl, the land animals and man all move. None of the creatures of the first three days can move. Moreover, the mobile creatures are arranged in order of progressively greater freedom of movement: the heavenly bodies move in fixed orbits and cannot change their paths; all living things—fish, fowl, beasts—can change their paths, though they move in set and prescribed ways, governed, as we would say, by largely fixed instincts; man alone moves in paths and ways that he can set for himself (at least in part).

Having begun to attend not to the temporality but to the logic—or intelligibility—of the sequence, we are in a position to discern the utterly logical and intelligible structure of the entire account.

The created order embodies four basic principles: *place, separation, motion,* and *life,* but especially *separation* and *motion*; places are necessary regions for housing separated kinds of beings and backgrounds for detecting their motion, while life may be seen, at first glance, as a higher and more independent kind of motion. Further, if one then treats locomotion as itself a more advanced kind of separation, in which a distinct being already separated from others also separates itself from place, we could say that *the* fundamental principle through which the world is created is *separation.* Creation, then, is the bringing of order out of chaos largely through acts of separation, division, distinction.

This view is strongly encouraged by the language of the text: the word "divide" or "separate" (from the root *b-d-l*) occurs explicitly five times in the first chapter, and the idea is implicitly present ten more times in the expression "after its kind," which implies the separation of plants and animals into distinct kinds or species.

Here is how Leo Strauss summarizes the sequence of creation in the first chapter, showing the principle of separation at work:

> [F]rom the principle of separation, light [which allows discernment and distinction]; via something which separates, heaven; to something which is separated, earth and sea; to things which are productive of separated things, trees, for example; then things which can separate themselves from their places, heavenly bodies; then things which can separate themselves from their courses, brutes; and finally a being which can separate itself from its way, the right way. . . . The clue to the first chapter seems to be the fact that the account of creation consists of two main parts. This implies that the created world is conceived to be characterized by a fundamental dualism: things which are different from each other without having the capacity of local motion and things which in addition to being different from each other do have the capacity of local motion. This means the first chapter seems to be based on the assumption that the fundamental dualism is that of distinctness, otherness, as Plato would say, and of local motion. . . . The dualism chosen by the Bible, the dualism as distinguished from the dualism of male and female, is not sensual but intellectual, noetic, and this may help to explain the paradox that plants precede the sun.

The creation of the world, in accordance with these intelligible principles, proceeds through acts of intelligible speech. Creation through speech fits creation by separation, for speech implies the making and recognition of distinctions. To name something is to see it distinctly, both as the same with itself and as other than everything else. To predicate or combine words in speech is to put together what mind has first seen as separate. Distinction, otherness, separation—or, if one prefers, the principle of contradiction, that A is other than not-A—is the very foundation of the possibility both of speech and of an articulated world.

With this in mind, we look again at the order of creation, as it is called into being through acts of speech. I again quote Strauss:

> [T]he first thing created is light, something which does not have a place. All later creatures

* I owe this new way of reading Genesis 1 largely to the writings of Umberto Cassuto and Leo Strauss, on which the next section of this essay heavily depends. See U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, Hebrew University, 1964), and Leo Strauss, "On the Interpretation of Genesis," *L'Homme,* January-March 1981, XXI (1), pp. 5-20. This remarkable essay informs my entire reading of Genesis 1.

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have a place. . . . [T]he things which have a place either do not have a definite place but rather fill a whole region, or [are] something to be filled—heaven, earth, seas; or else . . . they do not fill a whole region but [fill] a place within a region, within the sea, within heaven, on earth. The things which fill a place within a region either lack local motion—the plants; or they possess local motion. Those which possess local motion either lack life, the heavenly bodies; or they possess life. The living beings are either non-terrestrial, water animals and birds, or they are terrestrial. The terrestrial living beings are either not created in the image of God, brutes; or in the image of God—man. In brief, the first chapter of Genesis is based on a division by two, or what Plato calls *diaresis* [division by two].

The order of the cosmos is not only supremely intelligible; it is also *hierarchic*. The work of creation is completed by living things, created on Days Five and Six. Living things are characterized (1) by having a proper place—in the waters, above the earth before the firmament, or on the earth; (2) by being formed according to their kinds; (3) by reproducing themselves, according to their kinds (or species); (4) by having motion appropriate to their place (more free on land). Living things are higher than the heavenly bodies, as already indicated, (5) by having greater freedom of motion, man most of all. Most significantly, unlike the heavenly lights, living things also (6) have powers of awareness—especially hearing—which are implied in the receipt of God's blessings; they can recognize the distinctions that are manifest in the world and, ultimately, at least one of them—man—can convey and understand the distinctions conveyed in speech. Living things are characterized also (7) by neediness and vulnerability—indicated by the remarks about food [verses 29-30]—which may be what makes them in need of God's blessing. But if living things have needs, they also (8) have appetites, that is, inward and felt awareness of their lack coupled with an impetus to act in order to remedy the lack: around this germ of appetition, there will eventually appear desire, feeling, and a rich inner life in the higher animals and man.

The phenomenological characterization of life implicit in Genesis 1 is remarkably rich and remarkably apt: need and appetite for food from the world, openness to the world through sensory and intellectual awareness, power to move in the world and to alter it through action, activated by desire, passion, and will. Living things are higher than non-living things; and among living things, some are more alive than others—that is, their powers of awareness, action, and desire are more fully developed. Who could disagree?

Evolutionary theorists might disagree. Or rather, they would resist entering into the argument about hierarchy altogether. In his notebooks, Darwin wrote an exhortatory note to himself, "Never use higher or lower," but he could not keep himself from doing so; the terms are all over *The Origin of Species*. Insofar as evolutionary theory offers any standard for higher and lower, that standard could only be a standard of success, namely, "most surviving offspring"—in which case, at least in Chicago, the cockroach would be the highest being. Because evolutionary theory does not deal with the *beings* and the *character* of their *lives*, but only with their comings-into-being, it can in principle never fully appreciate theoretically the different degrees and grades of *being-present* that are manifestly here on earth.

But one point bears emphasis: the biblical assertion—I would say the *fact*— of hierarchy is not incompatible with the fact of evolution, or even with evolution by natural selection. It is only incompatible with orthodox evolutionary theory, which refuses to notice it *as hierarchy* and which cannot at present explain it. This ought to make us wonder about the hierarchy-blind character of present evolutionary theory. The special powers of human beings make the case most boldly.

III. The Highest Creature and his Place in the Whole

In the cosmology of Genesis, human beings clearly stand at the peak of the creatures. Not only is man the last of the creatures listed in hierarchic order; once he appears, the creation is complete. Though man himself is not said by God to be good—a point to which we shall return—once man is present (and blessed), "God saw *all* that He had made, and, behold, it was *very* good," by which, I take it, is meant that the all or the whole was complete, lacking in nothing. Given dominion or rule over the other animals, man is the most godlike or godly of the creatures: man alone is said to be in the image of God.

This teaching about the place and special dignity of man is today on the defensive. It has been attacked as both false and dangerous. Some say it expresses merely an anthropocentric prejudice, vulgarly called "speciesism" by some advocates of animal rights. Others, appealing to evolutionary theory, allege that, far from being godly, man does not even differ fundamentally from other animals: since all life is in the same business—survival and reproduction—man's apparent difference is merely superficial, a difference not of kind but only of degree. Still others, with moralistic purposes, blame this allegedly self-promoting thesis of man's special place for man's ruthless and smug exploitation of his planet and his animal relations, and even, indirectly, for the smugness that leads—so they argue—directly from self-preference and hierarchic thinking to racism and sexism.

I believe these charges are all mistaken. To show this, one would need to understand the meaning of "image of God," no small task. A sensible approach is to begin with the term itself and then

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consider its meaning in the local context provided by the text.

The Hebrew word translated "image" is *tselem*, from a root meaning "to shade": *tselem* would be a shadow or a phantom, and, hence, derivatively, a likeness or resemblance, something which both is and is not what it resembles. While being merely a likeness, a shadow not only resembles but also points to, and is dependent for its very being on, that of which it is a shadow.

How is man godlike? One possibility, of course, is that man and God are alike in looks; the Olympian gods of ancient Greece were anthropomorphic, and differed from human beings only in being ageless and immortal. But Genesis 1 offers no hint of God's corporeality. Instead, in the course of recounting His creation, the text introduces us to God's *activities* and *powers*: (1) God speaks, commands, names, and blesses; (2) God makes and makes freely; (3) God looks at and beholds the world; (4) God is concerned with the goodness or perfection of things; (5) God addresses solicitously other living creatures.

In short: God exercises speech and reason, freedom in doing and making, and the powers of contemplation, judgment, and care.

Doubters may wonder whether this is truly the case about God—after all, it is only on biblical authority that we regard God as possessing these powers and activities. But it is certain that we human beings have them, and that they lift us above the plane of a merely animal existence. Never mind for now where these powers came from; their presence, and the difference they make for human life, are indisputable. Human beings, alone among the earthly creatures, speak, plan, create, contemplate, and judge. Human beings, alone among the creatures, can articulate a future goal and use that articulation to guide them in bringing it into being by their own purposive conduct. Human beings, alone among the creatures, can think about the whole, marvel at its articulated order, wonder about its beginning, and feel awe in beholding its grandeur and in pondering the mystery of its source.

These demonstrable truths do not rest on biblical authority. Rather, our reading of this text, addressable only to us, and our responses to it, possible only for us, provide all the proof we need to confirm the text's assertion of our special place. Reading Genesis 1 demonstrates the truth of its claims about the superior ontological standing of the human. This is not anthropocentric prejudice; it is cosmological truth. And nothing we shall ever learn about *how* we came to be this way will ever make it false.

But we must be careful not to exaggerate our standing. Man may be, of all the creatures, the most intelligent, resourceful, conscious, and free—and in these respects the most godlike—but he is also the most questionable. In fact, Genesis 1, read with the fine print, provides this teaching as well. Man may have powers that resemble divinity, but he is also at most merely an image; man, who, quite on his own, is prone to think of himself as a god on earth and to lord it over the animals, is reminded by the biblical text that he, like the other creatures, is not divine. Though brought into being by a special creative act, man appears on the same day as the terrestrial animals; though in some respects godlike, man belongs emphatically to the world of animals, whose protective ruler he is told to be. Man is the ambiguous being, in-between, more than an animal, less than a god. This fact—and it is a fact—makes man a problem, as the Bible, even in this celebratory chapter, subtly teaches.

After nearly every act of creation, God looked at the creature and "saw that it was good." There are two striking exceptions: neither the firmament (or heavens), on Day Two, nor man, on Day Six, is said to be good. What bearing, if any, might these omissions have on the place and status of human beings?

Now one might say that there is no need to see or say that man is good; after all, he is made in God's image and that might make man "better" than good. Moreover, once human beings are present, the whole is said to be *very* good: does this not imply that each part—man especially included—is good? Perhaps. But what if the omission were intended and meaningful? On what understanding of "good" might it be simply true that man, as created, cannot yet be said to be good?

"Good" as used throughout Genesis 1 cannot mean *morally* good; when "God saw the light that it was good," He could not have seen that the light was honest or just or law-abiding. The meaning of "good" seems rather to embrace notions like the following: (1) fit to the intention; (2) fit to itself and its work, i.e., able to function for itself and in relation to the unfolding whole; and, especially, (3) complete, perfect, fully formed, clear and distinct and fully what it is. A being is good insofar as it is fully formed and fully fit to do its proper work.

A moment's reflection shows that man as he comes into the world is not yet good. Precisely because he is the free being, he is also the incomplete or indeterminate being. More pointedly, precisely in the sense that man is in the image of God, man is not good—not determinate, finished, complete, or perfect. It remains to be seen whether man will *become* good, whether he will be able to complete himself (or to be completed).

Man's lack of obvious goodness, metaphysically identical with his freedom, is, of course, the basis of man's *moral* ambiguity. As the being with the greatest freedom of motion, able to change not only his path but also his way, man is capable of deviating widely from the way for which he is most suited or through which he—and the world around him—will most flourish.

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The story of man's moral ambiguity and God's efforts to address it—a story that occupies the rest of the Bible—does not really begin in earnest until the tale of the Garden of Eden in the next chapter; Genesis 1 does not address man's work or his duties and does not speak about good and evil. Yet even while presenting its majestic cosmology and locating human life as highest in the context of the whole, Genesis 1 subtly hints at the reasons why man is existentially and morally so troublesome.

In this sense, the first chapter of the Bible prepares the rest. It not only tells of the temporal beginnings, answering our questions about ultimate causes; it not only uses the temporal account to convey the intelligible order and the hierarchy of being; it also begins the moral education of the reader.

It seems, then, that Genesis 1 is guided overall by a moral intention, that it is in fact an *ethical* text even more than it is a cosmological one. We need a third look at the text from this point of view.

IV. Listening Morally: Away from the Heavens

THE *cosmology* of Genesis 1 is discussable entirely within the confines of the first chapter itself; but properly to discern the *moral intention* of this beginning requires reading further. Nevertheless, in the light of such further reading, we will find the appropriate clues present already from the start. Indeed, the relevant evidence has already been presented and needs only to be recollected.

A main teaching—perhaps *the* main teaching—of Genesis 1 is the non-divinity of the cosmos, and, in particular, of the sun, the moon, the stars—in short, of everything connected with heaven. Here is the textual evidence: heaven and its occupants are not eternal; there is something temporally before, causally behind, and ontologically above the cosmos; the Hebrew word for Heaven, *shamayim*, is grammatically plural (actually, dual), not singular; the account begins with a primordial earth, and there is no primordial heaven; the heavenly bodies are not alive, not gods, but mere creatures; they are not even named by God; they are presented as merely useful for the earth, and rule only over day and night, not over the earth and man. The special demotion of the sun—regarded by other peoples as a god—has already been well documented: light, time, and even vegetation are presented as not requiring the sun. Not heaven but man has the closest relation to God; heaven is not said to be good. Heaven, the enduring vault of the cosmos, to which ancient peoples looked with awe and fear, wonder and reverence, is, according to the Bible, not deserving of such respect.

Why such an effort to demote the dignity of the cosmos, and, especially, of heaven? Is there perhaps some connection between the fact that man is not said to be good and the fact that heaven is not said to be good? The following answers suggest themselves.

Human beings, left to their own devices, would naturally incline to the worship of nature. Based on their experience of the world, and the knowledge to which their senses lead them, they would look up to the powers that be, and preeminently to the sun. Because of its permanence; its regular, ceaseless, perfect circular "motion"; its power and its beauty; and above all, its importance for human life as the source of life, warmth, and the growth of crops, the sun is always and everywhere the prime candidate for natural divinity.

These are not just primitive or foolish notions. Whether among the ancient Babylonians or Egyptians or Persians, or among modern-day Buddhists, we find men looking up to nature as something divine—not only from reasons of theory but also for purely practical reasons. Because human life is precariously dependent on sun and rain, the effort to appease, propitiate, and control the cosmic forces through worship and sacrifice and the reading of signs is a nearly ubiquitous feature of early human life, and certainly in the ancient Near East.

Thus, according to the Bible, the first to offer gifts to the divine—gifts not invited by God—was Cain, fittingly a farmer, no doubt concerned with rain and the appeasement of heaven. Noah, on getting off the Ark, builds an altar and roasts up some of his animal charges, again without instruction, perhaps in gratitude, but perhaps also in an effort to assure no more floods. And, most clearly, Babel, the universal human city, founded on reason and the arts, centers around a tower, like the ziggurats of the historical Babylon; in these ziggurats the priests, watchfully yet apprehensively, conducted measurements of the heavenly motions, on the basis of which they sought knowledge useful for the life of the city—forerunners of the astrological aspiration that persists to the present day.*

If these inferences do not persuade, the Bible makes the point explicit. In Deuteronomy, Moses exhorts the Israelites to remember the divine voice they heard at Mount Horeb:

> Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves—for ye *saw* no manner of likeness *[temunah]* on the day that the Lord *spoke* unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire—lest ye deal corruptly, and make you a graven image, even the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the heavens, the likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish

* See my essay, "What's Wrong With Babel?," which is scheduled to appear in the Winter 1989 issue of the *American Scholar*.

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that is in the water under the earth; *and lest thou lift up thine eyes unto the heavens, and when thou seest the sun and the moon and the stars, even all the host of the heavens, thou be drawn away and worship them, and serve them, which the Lord thy God hath allotted unto all the peoples under all the heavens.* [Deuteronomy 4:15-19, emphasis added]

Absent special revelation—indeed, absent the special revelation of the Exodus and the giving of the law at Mount Sinai—human beings would naturally be led to the worship of heaven.* Absent *hearing* God's word, human beings would follow their eyes, upward. Human beings, free and hence indeterminate, would *on their own* try to find their way in the world, based on their ordinary experiences; they would ultimately be led to orient themselves by the cosmic gods. This perfectly natural human tendency the Bible seeks to oppose, and right from the first verse, by denying that the heavens—or any other natural beings—are worthy of human reverence.

I CANNOT here explore in detail the so-called second creation story, the Garden of Eden, which explicitly examines the structure of human life and calls most profoundly into question the goodness of the human inclination autonomously to choose for oneself how to live. In that story, the knowledge to be avoided is knowledge of good and bad rooted in nature—the tree—and always within reach—at the center of our garden—through our immediate experience, once reason—the conversation with the serpent—has emancipated us from obedience to fixed ways. Suffice it to say that the second story even more radically supports the first, showing the folly of the human animal's inborn propensity to autonomy, to find its own way by the lights of reason and experience. But our willingness to suspect that our powers might be inadequate to the task of righteous living has been provided at the start, in Genesis 1's challenge to our native presumptions about the dignity and divinity of our given world. And what, one may rightly ask, is wrong, ethically speaking, in looking up to cosmic gods, or more simply, in trying to orient human life on the basis of knowledge of nature? After all, philosophers as diverse as Aristotle and Lucretius seem, at first glance, to have taught the life lived according to nature.

The Bible's answer would seem to square with current dogma: nature is morally neutral. Not only is it silent about right and justice; absolutely no moral rules can be deduced from even the fullest understanding of nature. Knowing even that man is the highest creature, because free, does not lead to any clear guidance about how his freedom is to be used.

Perhaps the philosophic life, the life of contemplation, for a few private individuals, might arguably be endorsed by a cosmology that begins with light, that is ordered on strictly intellectual principles, and that concludes with man as the one godlike being who can behold and appreciate the order of the world and ponder its source. But this interpretation seems forced: in presenting man's difference, Genesis stresses more his freedom of motion and action, less his theoretic intellect.

And regarding action, society, and politics, the point is incontestable: the cosmos can have nothing at all to say or teach about all the important questions of human beings *living with other human beings.* Not even the basic prohibitions against cannibalism, incest, murder, and adultery—constitutive for all decent human communities—can be supported by or deduced from the natural world. From the point of view of *righteousness,* indeed for all *practical* purposes, cosmic gods are about as helpful as no gods at all.

Nothing in the theory of evolution requires us to abandon this biblical teaching. Indeed, as I pointed out at the start, modern science altogether shares the Bible's view of the non-divinity of nature, the silence of nature regarding the human good, and, therefore, the insufficiency of human efforts to find our way of life by thinking about cosmic nature.

Yet whereas evolutionary theory suggests no alternative to nature, the Bible begins beyond nature with its divine Creator and moves throughout to supply our defect of ethical knowledge with its own stories and instructions regarding how to live. Though most of that moral instruction comes later in the Bible, the assertion of creation by God at the very start of the story seems crucial to the moral intent and to its ultimate success. We must return to look at the question of creation.

V. Creation and Evolution

OUR attempt at a literal and philosophical reading of the first chapter of Genesis has shown how its apparently temporal account conveys what we might call an ontological or metaphysical order of the entire world,

* One does not have to take this on biblical authority. Here is a famous passage from Aristotle's *Metaphysics,* to the same effect and with a similar moral point: "The ancients of very early times bequeathed to posterity in the form of a myth a tradition that the heavenly bodies are gods and that the divinity encompasses the whole of nature. The rest of the tradition has been added later as a means of persuading the many and as something useful for the laws and for matters of expediency; for they say that these gods are like men in form and like some of the other animals, and also other things which follow from or are similar to those stated. But if one were to separate from the later additions the first point and attend to this alone (namely, that they thought the first beings to be gods), he might realize that this was divinely spoken . . ." (1074b 1-11). (Translated by Hippocrates G. Apostle, with slight changes; Indiana University Press, 1966, pp. 208-09.) Unlike the biblical author, Aristotle believes that the additions made for ethical and legal purposes, however salutary and useful, represent deviations from the truth.

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beginning with all the familiar beings that appear universally in human experience. Moving us to think beyond our experience, Genesis discloses the immanent, hierarchic *order* of our world and its *intelligible principles,* both of them accessible to human beings as human beings, on the basis of reason alone. We see how this ontological account serves an overall *moral* intention, namely, to show, in small print, the incompleteness and ambiguity of the human, and, in bold print, the lack of divinity and moral irrelevance of the entire visible cosmos.

None of these biblical teachings needs to be retracted because of the findings of evolution. The nature, rank, and dignity of the various beings of the world remain unaltered, independent of the process by which they all came to be. In particular, the ambiguous metaphysical and moral status of human beings—in-between, in some respects god-like yet not-good, and morally indeterminate—can still be affirmed, taking men as they have been and are, evolutionary origins or no evolutionary origins.

Furthermore, because the major intention of the first chapter is not historical but ontological, ethical, and theological, I submit that Genesis is not the sort of book that can be refuted—or affirmed—on the basis of scientific or historical evidence. This is, I repeat, not because it is myth or poetry, but rather because its truths are metaphysical and ethical, not scientific or historical, because it teaches mainly about the status and human meaning of what is rather than about the mechanism by which things work or came-to-be.

But, surely, someone might say, I have skirted the main point of the entire first chapter: creation, and creation by God. The perfectly intelligible cosmology, accessible to human reason, is overarched by an assertion regarding divine creation (with God as the ultimate cause), an assertion for which the Bible offers no direct evidence or argument. Indeed, the passage from Deuteronomy quoted above suggests that, absent hearing the *voice* of God and, by extension, absent the revealed *speech* of the Bible itself, human beings would not readily come to the conclusion of creation, would not readily understand that there is an invisible, intelligent source of the visible and intelligible world. The *intelligibility* of the created order may be known by man as man, but about the *createdness* of the intelligible order—and all the more, about its creator—we readers know only by biblical assertion, that is, only by revelation.

Perhaps we should leave it at that. Yet because today's controversy concerns precisely the matter of creation, and because evolutionary theory does pose some challenges, not yet discussed, to the letter of the Genesis account *as it is ordinarily read* by many people, we should carry the analysis somewhat further—not least because such important matters are at stake.

To recapitulate: creation, according to Genesis 1, is the bringing of order out of primordial chaos, largely through a process of progressive separation, division, distinction, differentiation. If there is to be a world, there must be articulated and distinguishable beings; if there are to be *living* beings, capable of self-perpetuation, each individual must belong to a kind or species that by and large breeds true, i.e., after its kind. (Of this, more soon.)

At this level of generality, the biblical account is perfectly compatible with the fact of a slowly evolving cosmos, with life arriving late, beginning in the sea and only later emerging on earth, progressively distinguished into a variety of separated kinds.

Further, since the separations, actually made or appearing in the world, were all beforehand make*able,* one might even conclude that the biblical creatures—or at least the broadly possible *kinds* of creatures—were present *potentially* in the world, even before they were called forth into being (that is, created).

WITH this addition, one sees how one might find in Genesis 1 a doctrine of evolving or unfolding creation, or, conversely, how *certain* evolutionary accounts of the emergence of living forms are compatible with the Bible's account of a graded and sequential unfolding of the cosmos, through progressive acts of separating out implicit or at least latent possibilities.

True, evolution through the unfolding of latent possibilities is not the same as evolution through the natural selection of accidental variations—it is more Lamarckian than Darwinian. But leaving aside such questions of mechanism, "creation" and "evolution" might be perfectly compatible, at least in principle; everything depends on what is meant by each notion.

I do not yet fully understand these notions; and I rather suspect that evolution *solely by natural selection*—orthodox Darwinism—cannot be simply squared with the biblical account. But if the question is to remain open for further reflection, we need to challenge some common assumptions that usually lead people to see evolution and creation simply as opposed.

First, *evolutionists deny the primacy and even the intelligibility of natural kinds or species.* Some of them ridicule as "typological" or "essentialist" thinking the focus on natural species, characteristic not only of Genesis 1, but also of common human experience. Evolutionary theory, like natural science in general, shares the Bible's teaching regarding the intelligibility of the cosmos, but the intelligibility it seeks comes in the form of universal laws of natural change, rather than the specific forms of the separable natural beings. Indeed, the whole point of Darwin's researches was to discover the natural processes by which new

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species emerge from preexisting species, through descent and modification.

Yet the transformability of species does not refute the status or importance of species as a natural category; even Darwin's own title (*The Origin of Species*) presupposes the reality of species or natural kinds. Moreover, species remains a principle of intelligibility, maybe not for how the animals came-to-be the way they are, but certainly for *what* they are and *do*. In reproduction, like still mates with like, and the progeny are, for the most part, always like their parents in kind. Genealogy may explain lines of descent or kinship of genotypes, but existent organisms behave largely true to their type. Is not your average rabbit much more impressed by the difference between a rabbit and a fox than he is by the fact that they have the same genetic code or that they are mutually descended from a common mammalian forebear? Species, however mutable, still make sense.

Second, evolutionists, rejecting the notion of fixed species and insisting that life, like the universe, is constantly in flux, oppose this view to the Bible, which they assume *proclaims a static world, created once and for always the same.*

Yet the account in Genesis, contrary to popular belief, does *not* assert the eternity or fixity of the species. On the contrary, Genesis asserts—along with modern science—the *non*-eternity of the species: like the entire visible universe, each species had a beginning in time. Moreover, there are several subtle indications in the biblical text that invite us to think that God's created order is, in fact, subject to considerable change, *on its own.*

I begin with a trivial observation: God's creatures, at the start, all had their distinct place or habitat: sea, air, land. Where were the amphibious ones? Did God not make frogs and alligators? Could they be later "creatures," evolving out of an exclusively watery niche? Since frogs and alligators were surely known to the ancient Israelites, is the text perhaps raising questions about the "propriety" of those beings that cross boundaries and upset the distinctions that constitute the order of the world? Later, in Leviticus, all such ambiguous creatures will be declared unclean.

But the possibility of organic change is more strongly supported by explicit evidence from Genesis 1 itself. After the creatures have all appeared, God speaks to man about food:

> And God said: "Behold I have provided you with all seed-bearing plants which are on the face of all the earth, and every tree which has seed-bearing fruit; to you I have given it as food. And to every living being of the earth and to everything that creepeth upon the earth which has a living soul in it, I have given every green herb as food"; and it was so. [Verses 29-30]

All the animals were to have been what we call vegetarian. Keeping to this diet would disturb almost not at all the order of creation. Yet we must imagine that man and the animals as created *were capable* of eating meat. (The alternative is that meat-eaters *evolved,* later.) That they needed to be told what to eat is perhaps a sign that, left to their own devices, their appetites would naturally lead them to incorporate one another—disturbing the terrestrial order and giving rise to what we now call powerful pressures for natural selection.

In this subtle way, the text hints that the harmonious and ordered whole contains within it a principle—life, or, if you will, appetite, and eventually omnivorousness and freedom—that threatens any original order of the whole. Life is, in principle, destabilizing; man is so in spades. God's created order is not immune to change—indeed, as subsequent chapters relate, by the tenth generation all the earth (including the animals) has become corrupt and has erupted into violence and fury (Genesis 6:7, 11-12); the return through the flood to the watery chaos of the beginning completes the dissolution into chaos that life—and freedom—itself had wrought.

Life and freedom are only the most obvious principles of disordering and change. A scrupulously close look at the text suggests even more fundamental principles of change. First, there is the formless, watery chaos out of which everything came-to-be. How well does it accept form and order? Are all its native entropic tendencies abolished by the process of separation to which it is subjected? Or does its chaotic character persist beneath the forms of the world, making *any* order unstable? Does Genesis 1 subtly teach what was once known as the recalcitrance of matter?

The text speaks twice of each creative act, once to call forth ("Let there be"), once to report the act as performed ("And there was"). Only in the case of the creation of light is the report of the creative act letter-for-letter perfectly identical to the call for the creative act: "Let light be" and "Light be."* In all other cases, there is a clear difference between command and performance. For example, God asks the earth to "grass grass," but the earth instead *put forth* grass—leading the rabbis long ago to remark that the earth was first in disobedience.

In fact, resistance to order may be present even earlier: at the very start, after God has fully separated the light from the dark, calling the one Day and the other Night, the narrator reports that there was *evening* and there was *morning:* the separated Day and Night, quite on their own, had drifted partially back together, blurring the boundaries

* In the original, the words that precede and follow the *and* are identical—*yehi 'or.* English requires a change from *let there be* to *there was,* but because of a peculiarity in the use of Hebrew tenses no change is needed.

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between them.* The recalcitrance of matter, like the mischievous propensities of life, promise massive changes, even for God's created order.

Third, *evolutionists insist that the world and life emerged, and that change proceeds, by wholly natural processes,* and they reject, in particular, creation *ex nihilo*. But, as I read Genesis 1, creation need not mean *ex nihilo*. The text says nothing to support such a notion; in particular, it is silent about the origin of the primordial watery chaos. And if, as I suggested, the watery stuff offers immanent resistance to the coming and persistence of intelligible order, there may even be said to be some biblical evidence against the kind of divine omnipotence that creation *ex nihilo* would require. And if there is not creation *ex nihilo*, then what is *called* creation could very well proceed through perfectly natural—even evolutionary—processes.

CAN creation proceed through natural processes, or must creation mean something supernatural, something miraculous, i.e., something that defies the ordinary workings of nature? What help, if any, does Genesis 1 provide on this question? What, when we finally come down to it, *is* the *how* of creation according to Genesis 1?

The Hebrew word "create," *bara'*, is applied only to God; it occurs five times in the first chapter, once in the first summarizing sentence, once regarding the sea monsters, three times in connection with man. But this word is used, apparently synonymously, with another word, *'asah*, meaning "to make or do." *'Asah* occurs eight times in the first chapter, and three more times in the first three verses of Chapter 2 which conclude the account. The last words of the story (2:3) assimilate *bara'* and *'asah:* ". . . which God in creating had made." Curiously, two of the eleven uses of *'asah* refer not to God but to trees, to the trees *making* fruit. Is it possible that one could learn something about creation altogether by learning about the natural process of fruit trees making fruit? Here, once more, is Leo Strauss:

> The fruit tree making fruit, what kind of making is this? The fruit is originated almost entirely by the tree and, as it were, within the tree. Secondly, the fruit does not have the looks of a tree. Thirdly, the fruit is a complete and finished product. And last, the fruit can be separated from the tree. Perhaps creation has a certain kinship with this kind of making as distinguished from the following kinds of making: first, the making of something which does not originate almost entirely in the maker, artifacts, which require clay and so on in addition to the maker; secondly, the making of something which looks like the maker, the generation of animals; third, the making of something which is not complete but needs additional making or doing, the eggs; and finally, the making of something which cannot be separated from the maker: for example, deeds, human deeds, cannot be separated from the man who does them.

If creation through separation were, in fact, more like fruit-making than pottery, could it, just possibly, be an entirely natural process?

I have perhaps gone too far. If the analogy is strictly applied, creation becomes a process of God's fructification, out of God's own substance; and the distinction between God and world on which the text manifestly and vigorously insists would be lost.

But it has been useful to have pushed the account of creation this far in the naturalistic direction, for we can now turn the tables and put a hard question back to the evolutionists. Let us assume that creation *is* evolution, and proceeds solely by natural processes. What is *responsible* for this natural process? What is its *cause?* What is the *ultimate* source of the intelligibility of the natural order or of the actual intelligence that emerged within it with the coming of man? Can a dumb process, ruled by strict necessity and chance mutation, having no rhyme or reason, ultimately answer sufficiently for life, for man, for the whole?

Darwin himself was utterly baffled by how life first arose; in the last words of the last edition of *The Origin of Species,* he repairs to "the Creator" as the ultimate source of the first breath of life. Descartes before him had understood that if the human *mind* is thoroughly determined by physical causes there can be no such thing as scientific truth; he therefore was compelled to invoke God as the source of man's rational powers. And when we finally allow ourselves to come face to face with the mystery that there is anything at all rather than nothing, can we evolutionists confidently reject the first claim of the Bible—"In beginning, *God* created the heavens and the earth"?

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* I was first made aware of these "deviations" by Robert Sacks, St. John's College, Santa Fe, who has written a most unusual and helpful commentary on the Book of Genesis, entitled, *The Lion and the Ass.* It has been published serially in *Interpretation: A Journal of Political Philosophy,* beginning with Volume 8 (2-3), 1980, pp. 29-101. The commentary on Genesis 1 is found on pp. 31-47.

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The Psychology of Altruism

Joseph Adelson

THERE is a vast literature on moral psychology—literally thousands of articles, most of them reports of research, all attempting to probe the nature of virtuous behavior: how to produce it in the child, how to encourage it among the rest of us. To appreciate the effort expended, you must imagine hundreds of thousands of subjects filling out questionnaires, taking projective tests, undergoing interviews, being observed through one-way mirrors, being run through innumerable experiments, a great many of which involve such activities as giving and receiving electric shocks or lying to others and being lied to in return. (One of the many ironies of the topic is that scholars of morality so often devise and carry out elaborate deceits.)

Given the degree of toil and discomfort, the question arises whether it has been worth it. Have we learned anything new? The answer is mixed. On the one hand, we have begun to move toward a surer understanding, one that occasionally takes us a bit beyond what common sense alone would tell us. On the other hand, much of the work—most of it, in my view—has been misdirected and has produced only a small return on the amount of effort invested.

WHAT strikes one immediately about the research is its distance from ordinary life. The researcher studies behavior under artificially simple conditions, hoping to extract principles by a careful manipulation of reinforcements, incentives, suasions, and the like. If he persists, such principles emerge; and if he is fortunate, they persist. Much of the time, however, he introduces some wrinkle into the experimental design, some minor variation—the way he words the instructions, the number of people in the room, the nature of the incentive or its amount—only to discover that the principle so painstakingly constructed has simply vanished, leaving open the possibility that what has been uncovered is not a law but some vicissitude of experimental design.

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But let us imagine that the researcher has been lucky enough to avoid such misadventures, and that he has educed what seems to be a stable generalization. It is still not clear that the findings can be transferred to the far less structured situations we encounter in the real world. The researcher believes that they can, and he professes to show us parallels between the environments he devises and those we encounter in real life. But we must take that transfer on faith, and on a case-by-case basis. Sometimes the parallel persuades us, sometimes not.

Take, for example, the induction of "altruistic" behavior in children. Suppose a model were set up wherein adults in a gaming situation exhorted children to donate their winnings to charity. Suppose it were to be found—as in fact it has been—that children so encouraged contributed more than others not so persuaded. The finding is interesting but takes us only so far. Among other things, it is a thin form of altruism, at best. Ought we not expect altruism to embody a painful deprivation or a genuinely hazardous choice, and if so can we contrive an experiment to reproduce those deprivations or hazards? We can imagine such studies, but they would be difficult to carry out in view of the need to protect experimental subjects.

Another common approach to moral psychology relies heavily on interviews or questionnaires which aim to discern maturity of thinking, especially on issues of justice. A series of hypothetical dilemmas is provided and the quality of the answers is assessed. The studies are fairly easy to do, the theory informing them is seemingly straightforward. Yet as we will see, such studies have provoked considerable criticism on both technical and philosophical grounds; those interested in the approach are now divided into a number of warring camps. For the moment, however, I want to note only that this approach, taken by itself, tells us something about how respondents talk about moral questions but little about how they would act facing a serious moral choice. Talk is cheap. Some scholars have recognized the problem, and have attempted to connect moral "level" with actual moral behavior; but here too it proves difficult to find instances of authentic moral steadfastness.

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What we want to study is moral action, on behalf of others, carried out at some hazard, with one's life, safety, or freedom at stake. If we think about it for a moment, we become aware that this bloody century has provided a great many such cases, above all and prototypically those who hid or otherwise helped save Jews during the Holocaust. Of the few persons we know about, some—Raoul Wallenberg in particular—have come to seem larger than life. But what were the *typical* rescuers like? What set them apart from the majority of their fellows? Was it mere opportunity? Principles? Ideology? Character? We have not been able to answer those questions, although they are vital both for their own sake and also because they provide a test for our theories of moral psychology.

Now, however, we have been blessed by an exceptional work which answers precisely those questions and a great many others. *The Altruistic Personality: Rescuers of Jews in Nazi Europe** is an account of those noble souls who rescued European Jews during the war; it is also an account of those who could have but did not. We learn a great deal about both groups—how they were raised, how they perceived social reality (then and now), what they thought of the Jews and the Nazis and themselves. We learn how they emerged from the war, what their experiences meant to them, whether and how their lives were changed. Above all we learn, as the book's title suggests, about the nature of altruism and its origins—and, conversely, about when and how and why it does not develop. The first author, Samuel P. Oliner, is himself a survivor. The book opens with a moving account of his being rescued, as a twelve-year-old, by a Polish peasant family, given a change of name, taught the catechism—all to allow him to escape detection and endure the war. He is now a professor of sociology, his wife and co-author Pearl a professor of education, and together they have produced a remarkable achievement in social science. It is not the social science of the scholarly journals, which would likely publish the appendices—the 57 pages of tables, the nearly 1,500 research citations, and so on—but not the text itself, a lucid and sophisticated narrative centering on the truly fascinating interviews. The research itself, one should say, is technically scrupulous. Care was taken, for example, to sample subjects from a number of European nations, and to match as closely as possible those who rescued their fellow countrymen and those who withdrew or stood by indifferently.

The technical expertise is reassuring, but what holds our rapt attention is how clearly we are led to imagine life lived in those terrible times. It is not an account of heroic rescuers and sainted victims. In some cases the rescuers did not especially like those they were saving. Some of those rescued were willful or rigid. There is a heartbreaking tale of a woman who insists on leaving her haven to return to the ghetto to visit her family; her rescuers importune her not to do so but she leaves and is never again seen. There is an almost comical tale of an elderly Jew who cannot abide being confined, and one day determines to take an afternoon stroll in the sun. Warned that he might be recognized as a Jew, he carries an open umbrella which he uses to conceal his face, of course calling attention to himself (fortunately he escaped detection). What comes through, in short, in the dozens of examples given in the narrative is the surprise and unexpectedness of the ordinary.

"Ordinary" is also the word for the rescuers as a group. They were extraordinary in their virtue, in the risks they took, their selflessness, the singlemindedness with which they reached out to help others, often strangers. But they were not extraordinary personalities. For they were on the whole neither high nor low in social status, education, intelligence, talent, creativity. They were no more—and no less—than solid citizens. They were modest, avoiding celebrity, resisting adulation. They took chances, to an awe-inspiring degree, but entirely without bravura. We are touched by what they tell us, largely because of its directness, its simplicity. These are not intellectuals. They are not clever. Some of their contemporaries—Martin Heidegger, Paul de Man—would no doubt have provided deeper, richer, more complex and subtle explanations of their own wartime activities.

So if the rescuers were ordinary citizens, what led them to their roles? Was it mere circumstance, a matter of being in the right place at the right time? It is a question the Oliners take very seriously, They examine closely whether the randomness of opportunity played an important part in the decision to help. They conclude otherwise, in a central paragraph of the text:

> Rescuers did not simply happen on opportunities for rescue; they actively created, sought, or recognized them where others did not. Their participation was not determined by circumstances but their own personal qualities. Chance sometimes provided rescuers . . . with an opportunity to help, but it was the values learned from their parents which prompted and sustained their involvement.

The essential value involved caring for others. That of course is a value most of us learn and teach, but much of the time we give it only lip-service. For the individuals the Oliners studied, it was a force too strong to shrug off or cast aside. Faced with the choice of whether or not to help

*By Samuel P. Oliner and Pearl M. Oliner, Free Press, 419 pp., $24.95.

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those in peril, the rescuers found that for them there was no choice. "While some tried to resist the burdens . . . their sense of personal obligation did not allow them to do so." In some cases it was "a matter of heightened empathy for people in pain." Others had internalized the helping norms of the groups—often religious—to which they were attached. For a small minority, strong principles of justice or caring were prepotent. In all these cases the need to help others was preemptive, imperative. Their values had the force of drives.

What we learn from the Oliners is that such values will be internalized under certain conditions. The parents themselves live by them, practicing what they preach, hence offering a model of altruistic behavior. The children are raised gently but firmly. Moral standards are high, yet the parents avoid harsh discipline. The family atmosphere is affectionate. Children are encouraged to understand the feelings of others; that empathic outlook seems to structure the moral code.

What of those who did not help the Jews? Once again the key determinant is character. The bystanders are constricted, cold, distrustful. They do not expect much goodness from others, having experienced so little of it at home. It is every man for himself. They are—in the Kleinian sense—paranoid personalities, sour, suspicious, vigilant, self-absorbed. They tell you they were too weak to protect the Jews; after all, they could barely protect themselves; and in any event, the Jews had it coming to them, did they not?

The character traits endure. Some of the most interesting results tell us of the postwar activities of both rescuers and bystanders, the former far more likely to continue caring for others—indeed, we have here some of the strongest findings in the research. By factors of two or three or five or ten to one, rescuers more often describe themselves as feeding the sick and aged, or providing active help for groups or causes, or leading recreational activities, or providing counsel to others. Altruism, clearly enough, is at the core of the personality, beginning early in childhood and surviving into old age.

Does that surprise us? Probably not. A great many of us, were we ignorant of the findings and asked to predict them, would venture that the rescuers were warm-hearted and socially responsible people. We would also guess that they became so through their rearing, through precept and example. And we would likely imagine that those traits will continue to show themselves in the postwar years, character being destiny.

That being the case, why are the findings so important? Because the rescuers' study is a corrective, one much needed, as the Oliners clearly recognize (though saying so most tactfully), to the usual study of morality in which social science, following fashion, following insular patterns of method and doctrine, manages to take us away from where common sense would lead us.

I POINTED out earlier that the experimental studies of social behavior kept us at a distance from the moralities of everyday living. They also have a more serious flaw, since they derive from (and support) the assumption that the sources of virtue and vice are to be found outside ourselves, in the environments we confront. What makes us good or bad is that there are incentives or disincentives, expectations or opportunities, residing in the situation. We read the "realities," we calculate costs and benefits, we imitate, we respond to pressures. If I steal it is because I see others doing so, or because I see a chance to avoid getting caught, or because I am in great need of money.

That view of our motives does not account for most of the important things we choose to do or avoid doing. It certainly cannot account for the rescuers. They were not hostages of the situation; to the contrary, they were determined to transcend the situation, in the service of their values. There were no incentives to act as they did, only the most frightening disincentives. They did not respond to pressures, but resisted them. In every way we can conceive, the rescuer is the antitype to the empty organism imagined by the "situation" theory associated with the names of Walter Mischel and David Rosenhan, among many others.

The aim of this doctrine is to enthrone "reality"—that is, the extrinsic—for the sake of dethroning the intrinsic, anything deeply resident in the self. I am fairly sure the essential target is not goodness, but evil. The point of situation theory is to confirm the Lockean agenda, the idea, so deeply American, that nothing fixes us, not character, not temperament, surely not biology. It is an admirable idea within limits, more attractive than its opposite, but in the utopian version adopted by this mode of social science, it has become one of the follies of the current age.

But situationism is a theory in retreat; the journals now carry earnest refutations when just a few years ago they carried clever demonstrations. On the other hand, the cognitive developmental theory propounded by Lawrence Kohlberg, building on a base provided by Piaget's early work on the moral reasoning of young children, remains as influential as it has been for a quarter of a century now.

According to Piaget, the child's ethical thought is primitive, resting on the idea that the rules laid down by authority are immutable and eternal. As cognitive capacity matures, authentic modes of moral reasoning make their appearance, the child moving toward adult notions of justice and fairness.

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Kohlberg's contribution was to extend these observations, and to propose a six-stage hierarchy of moral maturity. Once the child is past the primitive levels, he is liable to be found at what is called the "conventional" stages, marked (Stage III) by concern for interpersonal harmony and the welfare of others, or by the belief in obeying society's laws, so as to maintain the social order (Stage IV). Most adults are to be found at these levels, which are, one should say, treated condescendingly by adherents of the system, Stage III by being termed informally "good-boy/good-girl morality," and Stage IV "law-and-order morality." The favorite stages, V and VI, are those requiring high levels of abstract thinking, the first involving a social-contract conception of the moral order, the second an emphasis upon universal principles, often considered neo-Kantian.

This approach has generated an enormous body of writing; it would require, literally, a book-length manuscript to describe and comment adequately upon the critiques and counter-critiques. One treads warily: any generalization can be contradicted by this or that or the other study. That quarrelsomeness itself makes one uneasy; so much of the writing has the purpose of shoring up those faults of the structure which have become undone. The major problems seem to be these: that the different "levels" of moral reasoning may not be levels at all, merely variations in cognitive (or rhetorical) style; furthermore, the levels show no consistent relationship with behavior, for there are amoral or immoral personalities who score high, that is, talk well. One can train people to raise their scores, but it does not seem to lead to more virtuous behavior.

The Oliners' research provides a perfect example of the problem—namely, the rescuers themselves, whose dominant mode of moral cognition, empathy in caring for others, is at a low level (Stage III) in the hierarchy. The best-known critique of the system, by Carol Gilligan, offers a similar emphasis, pointing out that the putative inferiority of Stage-III thinking may involve little more than a tacit bias against an approach found more frequently among women.

That may well be true, but an even more telling case can be made against the intellectualistic biases of the system, its tendency to overvalue the capacity for abstract thinking, which in practice often amounts to a preference for moral sententiousness. It is a view, in short, which flatters those given to intricate modes of ratiocination, so we can understand its appeal to academics.

Indeed, academic life in these sorry times provides a compelling argument for the disjunction between abstract morality and virtuous behavior. When you hear elevated moral discourse on campus these days you can be fairly sure it is being used to justify a peccant action—opportunism, cravenness, hypocrisy. There seems to be nothing these days that cannot be justified by clever moralizing—even Paul de Man's blatant anti-Semitism is magically transformed through philosophical sleight-of-hand. Those habits of discourse have now found their way into the polity at large, where the cant of "universal principles" celebrates moral squalidness.

Here is a chilling example, one which emerged during the contretemps at the Chicago Art Institute, when a satirical portrait of the late Mayor Washington was forcibly removed. Alan Streeter, an alderman said to speak for the black community, commented as follows

> The fellow who drew that picture is Jewish.* The Jewish community tried to keep our people silent. . . . We will not tolerate that picture hanging on the wall, Constitution or no Constitution. There is a higher moral law. . . . I don't care what the Supreme Court says or the local judicial system says. . . .

Note the trajectory of moral discourse: the rule of law (the judicial system, Stage IV), and of social contract (the Constitution, Stage V), are transcended by the idea of universal justice (a higher moral law, Stage VI), all of it—note well—embellishing an anti-Semitic diatribe.

We have seen that the two major directions in postwar moral psychology have fallen far short of their promises to us, not surprisingly, given goals so ambitious and means so constricted. One approach would not give enough attention to the person, seen as a cipher reacting almost reflexively to the environment. The other overvalues mere cerebration, neglecting drives, emotions, interpersonal bonds, and the conflicts all of these may generate. Both approaches reflect some of the ancient inhibitions of American academic psychology, above all its wish to avoid too deep an immersion in human inwardness. The cure for that would seem to be psychoanalytic theory, but that doctrine is at its best in the study of anomaly, and—leaving aside such mavericks as Robert Coles—has been unable to tell us much about the moralities of everyday life.

Fortunately, there have been other directions taken, though they were long overlooked and are still undervalued. They do not make up a school. They are eclectic, hence complex, hence difficult to summarize or to capture in catch-phrases. They derive largely, though not exclusively, from the study of child development, in the work of such scholars as Jerome Kagan, Ervin Staub, Robert Hogan, and Martin Hoffman.

Hoffman's writing is especially germane, since it centers on contrasting styles of parental discipline, looking at differences associated with par-

*In fact, he is not.

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ental power assertion at one extreme and the cultivation of fellow-feeling at the other. The upshot is that you will more likely raise a generous child by stressing the effects of his actions upon another's well-being. Of course it is not as easy as that—depending on age and circumstances, many other modes may come into play, including at moments sheer prohibition. Yet the caring youngster generally is raised in a family which uses a mixture of reason and empathy.

There is a rare, gratifying confluence to be seen here, in the mutual confirmations between work done at different times with different samples and techniques. Even so, we must not simplify matters, as the Oliners are at pains to remind us. In a subtle yet perspicuous final chapter, they argue that moral virtue cannot be reduced to a single source, whether that be empathy, or adherence to altruistic social norms, or independence of thought. Writing as intellectuals to intellectuals, they warn us against idealizing a morality rooted in "autonomous thought." It may produce a few capable of great moral heroism, but, on the other hand, "such individuals may not in fact extend themselves on behalf of people in distress or danger. Ideology, grand vision, or abstract principles may inure them to the suffering of real people." They quote H. D. Forbes on Plato, who knew that "independence of mind can have more than one outcome; it may promise the philosopher but deliver the tyrant."

That is the terrible lesson of this century, which we seem unable to learn.

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Losing in Latin America

Robert Kagan

Critics of Ronald Reagan argue that American influence is now on the wane in Latin America—as indeed it is—because the Reagan administration was too interventionist, too eager to apply American power unilaterally and to meddle in Latin American affairs, particularly in Nicaragua and Panama. Yet if ever there was a case where political decisions at home, and not "imperial overstretch," undermined American power abroad, it is in Latin America.

The decisive battle of recent years over Latin American policy occurred on February 3, 1988. The vote in Congress that day against aid to the Nicaraguan resistance—the so-called *contras*—was more than just another in a series of close calls that might soon be reversed again. It was the first and greatest triumph scored by a newly powerful foreign-policy faction in the Congress—call it Left-liberal—which sought not just to defeat the Reagan administration's policy toward Nicaragua in particular and Central America in general, but to replace it with a quite different policy of "nonintervention" and withdrawal.

But this noninterventionist approach represents more than a dramatic departure from Reagan's policy. It is also a departure from what was once a notably Democratic and "liberal" policy toward Latin America—the policy that was most clearly articulated and most fully implemented during the presidency of John F. Kennedy.

Unlike the Eisenhower administration before it, which regarded the rightist regimes in Latin America as the most reliable bulwark against the spread of Communism there and which refused to take any action that might destabilize them, the Kennedy administration made an active effort to promote democracy in Latin America. To be sure, Kennedy's goal was no different from Eisenhower's: he too wanted to defeat Communism. Indeed, to understand his priorities one need only recall his statement to Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. about the Dominican Republic in 1961:

> There are three possibilities in descending order of preference: a decent democratic regime, a continuation of the Trujillo [dictatorship], or a Castro regime. We ought to aim at the first, but we really can't renounce the second until we are sure that we can avoid the third.

Nevertheless, Kennedy and his advisers sought an approach that was more in keeping with American democratic ideals, that mirrored the image of progressivism in Kennedy's domestic policies, and, most importantly, that could compete successfully (as Eisenhower's policies had failed to do in Cuba) with what seemed to be the increasingly powerful attraction of Communism.

This approach was interventionist by design. Kennedy wanted to support democratic leaders like Betancourt in Venezuela and Figueres in Costa Rica, promote liberal reform where possible, and back up the policy with economic carrots and sticks. Thus, although occasionally tolerant of military or civilian dictators, he frequently severed diplomatic relations, withheld economic assistance, and publicly attacked countries where military coups had occurred, insisting on a rapid return to democratic government. And because, in the words of one key adviser, "good wishes and economic plans do not stop bullets or hand grenades or armed bands," the Kennedy administration gave military assistance to friendly governments and used force and the threat of force against unfriendly ones.

In the most notorious case, the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1961, Kennedy showed no hesitation in using force unilaterally against a Communist government.* Kennedy also used

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*Schlesinger's opinion of the Bay of Pigs failure at the time is worth recalling in light of his very different position in today's debate over Central America. He had opposed the operation on the ground that the possible damage to the President outweighed the chances for success, but he did not believe "the notion of sponsoring an exile attempt to overthrow Castro [was] intolerable in itself. . . . The rigid nonintervention argument had never deeply impressed me. The United States had a proud tradition of supporting refugees against tyranny in their homelands. . . . Few of those who expressed indignation at aid to the opponents of Castro would have expressed equal indignation if in 1958 the American government had given identical aid to Castro against Batista; nor would they have objected in April 1961 to aid for the democratic Dominicans against Trujillo. Moreover, in a world shadowed by Communism, the pure theory of nonintervention had even less force."

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force, even "gunboat diplomacy," in the Dominican Republic. After the assassination of the Dominican dictator Trujillo, in 1961, Kennedy sent eight American ships with 1,800 Marines to sail off the coast of Santo Domingo, in an effort to support a transition to democracy and prevent the return of *Trujillismo* in the person of the late dictator's son. As Schlesinger describes it:

> Given the ingrained Latin American hatred of gunboat diplomacy, this course involved obvious risks. On the other hand, it would be, for once, Yankee intervention to sustain a democratic movement rather than to destroy it, and the President was prepared to take his chance.

And, as it turned out, the action led to a coup against the younger Trujillo, who fled the country.

The Kennedy administration, in short, employed all available means not only to fight Communism but—both as part of that fight and for its own sake—to support democracy; and except for the Bay of Pigs failure, it did so without apology. In the eyes of the administration, the belief that it was working on the side of democratic progress in Latin America justified widespread intervention, and so did the equally powerful belief that intervention on behalf of democracy was the best way to defeat Communism in the hemisphere.

But all this changed when Lyndon Johnson became President in 1963. As the principal Latin American policy-maker under Johnson stated the new policy:

> We cannot put ourselves in a doctrinaire straitjacket of automatic application of sanctions to every unconstitutional regime in the hemisphere with the obvious intention of dictating internal political developments in other countries.

In spite of the noninterventionist ring of this statement, however, the Johnson administration for all practical purposes did intervene in Latin America—on the side of the authoritarian Right. Thus Johnson did nothing to harass the increasing number of military dictatorships in Latin America, and when in 1964 there was a military coup against a Left-leaning President in Brazil, he recognized the new government within forty-eight hours. Then, a year later, in the Dominican Republic, Johnson intervened even more directly on the side of the Right.

After Kennedy's successful use of "gunboat diplomacy" to oust Trujillo's son, the transition to democracy in the Dominican Republic had culminated in the election of the leftist democrat, Juan Bosch, as president. But Bosch had then been overthrown by a military-backed junta. In April 1965, his supporters launched a military insurrection, the violence of which threatened the safety of Americans. Johnson responded by sending in the Marines, later claiming that he had also averted a Communist takeover in the Dominican Republic.

Johnson's action set off a political explosion in the United States and particularly within the liberal wing of the Democratic party where it was believed that he had reversed Kennedy's approach—though, ironically, in a little over a year, internationally-supervised elections returned the Dominican Republic to democratic rule, which it has maintained ever since.

If Johnson was not going to continue the Kennedy approach, his Republican successors certainly had no intention of doing so. Although they had a greater tolerance for new, Left-leaning goverments, and except for the special case of Chile from 1970 to 1973, Presidents Nixon and Ford pursued an Eisenhower-style policy of "nonintervention" in Latin America. As in the days of Eisenhower (and Roosevelt and Truman as well, for that matter), the United States wanted allies where it could find them, which meant good relationships with existing governments of whatever political stripe. As it happened, dictatorships were then in the ascendant in Latin America.

For this and other reasons, the anti-Americanism of the Latin Left grew during the Nixon and Ford years. Failed expectations after the Kennedy years, the rise of a "Third World" and "North-South" consciousness, the fall of Allende in Chile, and the obvious weakness of the United States as it painfully extricated itself from Vietnam—all contributed to a breakdown in the good relations that had been developed under Kennedy between the United States and the democratic Left throughout Latin America.

The hostility of Latin democrats, in turn, affected ideological and political struggles in the United States, convincing some Americans—mostly conservatives—that the Latin democratic Left could not be trusted, and others—mostly liberals—that the United States was once again on the wrong side of history.

By the early 1970's, however, liberal perceptions of what it meant to be on the right side of history had changed dramatically. Kennedy's policies had assumed that the United States had a necessary and beneficial role to play in advancing the cause of democracy in Latin America. Vietnam destroyed such confidence in American capabilities and intentions. When former Kennedy officials turned against the Vietnam war, many also turned against their own policy of American activism, in Latin America and elsewhere. Isolationism became an important ideological strain in the Democratic party; unlike the Republican isolationism of earlier days, which feared the United States would be sullied by involvement in the world, the new Democratic isolationists believed the world would be sullied by us.

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By the time Jimmy Carter took office in 1976, there was little consensus within the Democratic party on Latin American policy other than a strong tendency toward a noninterventionist "multilateralism." Of course Carter's human-rights policies led to a unique form of interventionism that frequently contradicted his overall approach. Yet even while the United States under Carter attacked Latin dictators by reducing or cutting off aid, it did little to promote internal political reform. True, under pressure from the Carter administration one or two dictatorships promised to hold elections some time in the future. But by and large the pattern was that authoritarian allies under assault by Communist forces could expect criticism from the United States, but neither sufficient American opposition to topple them nor sufficient help to sustain them. As for the democratic Left in those countries, it could expect sympathy, but not actual support.

THE contradictory impulses of Carter's Latin America policy came to a head-on collision in Nicaragua. Nicaragua under Somoza posed the classic problem that the Kennedy approach had been designed to address. An unpopular right-wing dictator faced a broad political opposition including key figures of the democratic middle class and a Communist insurgency seeking an armed victory. It was Cuba all over again. Nor did most key Carter officals have any doubts either about the goals of the Sandinistas or the importance of stopping them. According to one of those officials, Robert Pastor:

> The Carter administration had foreseen the possibility of a Sandinista victory about a year before it occurred. Viewing the key Sandinista military leaders as Marxist-Leninists who admired Cuba and despised the United States, the administration aimed to preclude a military victory by the Sandinistas but not to support Somoza, who was seen as indefensible.

Other Carter officials, like Assistant Secretary of State Viron Vaky, believed the United States should intervene in support of a non-Communist, democratic alternative to Somoza. Writes Pastor:

> Vaky thought only the United States could solve the problem of Somoza, and that it should use whatever force necessary—barring assassination—to remove him. . . . Otherwise the situation would polarize even further, increasing the probability of a Marxist victory.

But Carter, says Pastor, "did not believe that the United States should engage in a policy of changing the governments of small nations"; instead, he sought a "multilateral" solution in which Latins would take the lead in brokering a negotiated settlement. Thus, throughout most of the growing crisis in Nicaragua, Carter opposed all practical forms of U.S. involvement beyond innocuous diplomatic mediation.

When the Carter administration would not move against Somoza, governments and parties of the Left throughout Latin America nevertheless went ahead and supported the Sandinistas, giving them not only guns and money but ultimately political legitimacy as well. In the end, they disregarded the United States and relegated it to the role of spectator to a wholly Latin solution of a Latin problem. As in Cuba two decades earlier, the Latins did their job in getting rid of the right-wing dictator and left it to the United States to worry about the Communists they had helped put in power.

And once again, a Communist victory forced a reevaluation of U.S. policy and the abandonment of noninterventionism. Like Eisenhower before him in Cuba, Carter scrambled to put together a non-Communist coalition in Nicaragua in the waning days before the Sandinista victory. His eleventh-hour intervention into Nicaraguan politics, however, was also too little and too late. At this point, Carter once again reversed course and began to provide support to the new Sandinista government.

What lay behind the reversal was both ideological conviction and electoral politics. Open hostility to the Sandinista government would have been an admission of defeat, not only for Carter, but for the Democratic party's new noninterventionist, multilateralist policies. Left-liberal Democrats were not prepared to make such a concession. They had railed for years against America's "inordinate fear of Communism." Just a few years earlier, many of them had argued that a Communist victory would be better for the Vietnamese people than a victory by U.S.-backed forces. Now they hailed the Sandinista victory over Somoza as the just triumph of nationalists who would end social and economic inequities in Nicaragua and repair the damage done by more than a century of U.S. interventions. The Left-liberal Democrats considered the Sandinista victory their victory as well, and they did not want to see it undone, either ideologically or militarily.

The pervasiveness of the Left-liberal view on Nicaragua in the news media and in academia gave Carter a unique opportunity to try and limit the political damage. Eisenhower, after years of vitriolic anti-Communism, could not conceal his failure in Cuba. But Carter and the liberal Democrats, after years of dismissing the Communist threat, could try to change the perception of theirs.

Yet while their chief reason for pursuing the new policy was to avoid a loss in the political and ideological battle, they justified it as an effort to reform the Sandinistas. With economic aid and friendly relations, they said, they could cajole the victorious Sandinistas into acceptable international and internal behavior. Pastor has put it best: "Instead of trying to lift the 'mask of democracy' from the faces of the Sandinistas to show they were really Communists, it would be better to try to

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take the mask seriously—at face value, so to speak—and by doing so, try to graft the mask to their faces."

The Sandinistas themselves, however, did not prove to be the best allies in executing the "mask of democracy" strategy. Not only did they continually speak of their commitment to Marxism-Leninism, but after their victory, they moved quickly in classic Marxist-Leninist fashion to consolidate power in Nicaragua, unifying the Sandinista party and the army, ensuring that party officials held most of the key positions of power, and shunting aside the "bourgeois" elements they had earlier embraced. When it was discovered that the Sandinistas were also bent on exporting their revolution by sending arms to the Marxist-Leninist guerrillas in El Salvador, Carter, in one of the final acts of his presidency, was forced to suspend aid to Nicaragua.

WHEN Ronald Reagan took office in 1981, his top priority in Latin America was stopping Communism, and Reagan officials were determined to succeed where Carter had failed. Indeed, they had as much contempt for Carter's policies as the Kennedy administration had felt for Eisenhower's. But the Reagan administration was divided over the best strategy to use in Latin America, in part because contradictory lessons were drawn from Carter's failures. One view was that the human-rights policy had weakened allied governments and opened the way to totalitarian forces, as had happened, some argued, in Iran as well as Nicaragua. For many conservatives, this pointed to the desirability of a return to Eisenhower's policy of supporting anti-Communist regimes even if they were authoritarian and of refusing to intervene on the side of democracy. But for some others the lesson was that intervention to promote democratic change, in the Kennedy manner, was essential to prevent a Communist victory.

In the early years, the first view prevailed: the administration's relationships with the military regimes in Argentina and Chile generally followed the Eisenhower tradition. At first, too, the policy of supporting the Nicaraguan *contras* against the Sandinistas also fit the same mold, as was evident in the rightist military orientation of the early *contra* leadership and the assistance then provided to it by the Argentineans.

The turning point came as a result of events in El Salvador, where, in the first great test of Reagan's policies in Latin America, the Kennedy approach won out. The reason was that anti-Communist noninterventionism had been all but ruled out by events in El Salvador.

To fight Communism in El Salvador required American advisers, trainers, and military equipment. Yet Congress had not approved such an intervention since Vietnam. Even arguments on national-security grounds had not been enough to sustain anti-Communist policies in most areas of the Third World. But what the Reagan administration learned in the debate over El Salvador was that support for democracy could overcome congressional resistance. It was Reagan's backing of the leftist Christian Democratic party headed by José Napoleón Duarte that succeeded in building a bipartisan coalition in favor of training, advising, and financing a war against the Communist guerrillas in El Salvador. In the House of Representatives, that coalition included almost the entire Republican membership and about 50 Democrats, mostly Southern conservatives, including Majority Leader Jim Wright of Texas.

Thus, after a lapse of two decades, it was a conservative Republican President, Ronald Reagan, who succeeded in recreating at least a modicum of support within the Democratic party for John F. Kennedy's abandoned approach to Latin America.

The new approach in El Salvador worked. It dealt a severe blow to the guerrillas while simultaneously allowing democratic reforms to go forward. It found and sustained that democratic Center which had been lost in Cuba and Nicaragua.

THANKS to this success, what began in El Salvador as an isolated strategy gradually came to dominate Reagan's policy toward Latin America. To the surprise of many, Reagan did not abandon Carter's emphasis on human rights, but eventually integrated it into his own Kennedyesque strategy. Carter had attacked human-rights violations only with words and gestures of dissociation; Reagan was willing to go further—to intervene, and to back efforts to defend human rights and democratic reforms with American influence, money, and arms.

Reagan, like Kennedy, took office at a time when the cycle in many Latin countries was turning back toward democracy. Military rulers were replaced by elected civilians in Ecuador (1979), Peru (1980), Bolivia and Honduras (1982), Argentina (1983), El Salvador (1984), Brazil and Uruguay (1985), and Guatemala (1986). Not even the heyday of democracy in the first two years of the Kennedy administration could compare either in breadth or longevity with the democratic trend of the 1980's.

The spread of democracy itself reinforced the interventionist tendency in the Reagan administration, which in turn came to stake a great deal, politically and ideologically, on the continued success of democracy in the hemisphere. After Elliott Abrams became Assistant Secretary of State for the region in 1985, the administration took increasingly strong stances against the few remaining dictatorships in Chile, Paraguay, Haiti, and Panama. Conversely, when threats of military coups arose against democratically-elected presidents, the administration used its influence to

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protect the regime—even when, as in the case of Peru's Alan Garcia, the president in question was outspokenly hostile to the United States. The Reagan administration also helped prevent coups against Guatemala's President Cerezo in 1986 and Argentina's President Alfonsín in 1987.

If, as some claim, there is a cyclical alternation between periods of dictatorship and periods of democracy in Latin America, it may well be that averting coups in these three countries disrupted the cycle. It is also possible that these American interventions deterred other would-be plotters in the region, since there has not been a single successful coup against a democratically-elected president in the Western hemisphere during the Reagan years. (Coups in Panama and Haiti were against regimes of dubious legality or legitimacy.)

THE success of democracy in Latin America, however, did not solve the problem posed by the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, which over time became the overriding preoccupation of the administration.

To begin with, Reagan pursued a tougher version of the Carter policy toward the Sandinistas. Thus in 1981 he sent Assistant Secretary of State Thomas Enders to Managua to offer an agreement under which the United States would pledge not to intervene in Nicaragua's internal affairs, and would renew economic aid and expand cultural relations, in exchange for a Sandinista commitment to cease the military build-up and stop supporting foreign insurgencies. But when the Sandinistas rejected Enders's offer, the Reagan administration decided that the only alternative was to support armed insurrection against them. The problem was how to win congressional support for such a policy.

In these early years a consensus in Congress could be achieved only in opposition to Sandinista support for the Salvadoran guerrillas, about which even the Carter administration had complained. The Reagan administration, therefore, limited its stated goals to the interdiction of arms shipments and pressure on the Sandinistas to stop meddling in El Salvador. The early Boland amendments, which forbade aiding the *contras* for any other purposes, reflected this political consensus.

But it was a consensus too fragile to survive its first test, the American mining of the Nicaraguan harbors. The mining was a political disaster. With its resonances of Nixon and Vietnam, it embarrassed many pro-*contra* Congressmen, and the tenuous coalition broke down in the spring of 1984. In an effort to maintain even minimal congressional support, the administration agreed to several rounds of talks with the Sandinistas in Manzanillo, Mexico, which, predictably, again produced no results.

In these early years, the Latin democratic Left was also trying to find a way to cope with the Sandinistas. Most of the Sandinistas' former democratic allies were at least privately disenchanted. Some had even begun to help anti-Sandinista forces. Costa Rica once again served as a transshipment point for arms and as a strategic base, this time for *anti*-Sandinista forces on the southern front. Honduras provided even greater assistance to the U.S.-backed *contras* in the North. Duarte and the Salvadoran military also helped. Even Carlos Andrés Pérez of Venezuela provided assistance to *contra* leader Edén Pastora, while continuing Venezuela's own efforts to moderate Sandinista behavior.

At the same time, however, the Latin Left remained opposed to U.S. intervention. In January 1983, the Contadora Group of Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela, and Panama began its efforts to make peace in the region without U.S. involvement.

In tandem with the domestic political defeat it had suffered as a result of the mining scandal, opposition to its policy in Latin America itself gradually forced the Reagan administration to make an adjustment. Key Reagan officials now concluded that the only way to win support for the *contras* was to repeat the El Salvador strategy and make democracy in Nicaragua the goal of American policy. Accordingly, from the end of 1985 through 1987 the administration pressed the *contras* to reform, as it had earlier pressed the Salvadoran military, and sought to attract new elements from the Nicaraguan democratic Left to replace the military men and right-wingers who had formed the original core of the *contra* leadership. Arturo Cruz, Alfonso Robelo, and later Alfredo Cesar—all former allies of the Sandinistas—now joined the *contras*, enhancing their appeal to a broader spectrum of the Nicaraguan population. With the changes in leadership, the swelling numbers of peasants and former Sandinistas in the *contra* ranks, and the new democratic objectives of Reagan's policy, the *contras* evolved from a purely military force into a broadening political movement.

While shifting its stated goals from interdiction to the establishment of democracy, the Reagan administration also stepped up its campaign to unmask the Sandinistas. Reagan officials attacked efforts by the liberal Left to portray the Sandinistas as democrats and took pains to document the expansionist character of the Sandinista regime.

YET even as it worked at tearing away the "mask of democracy," the administration continued to profess in public what most of its officials privately believed to be untrue—that there could be an acceptable negotiated settlement with the Sandinistas. That was the price the administration thought it had to pay for renewed congressional approval of humanitarian aid to the *contras* in 1985. Ultimately this

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would prove to be an even higher price than the administration had imagined.

In the meantime, however, the new strategy of the administration worked remarkably well. In 1986 Congress voted by a slender margin to provide $100 million in military assistance to the *contras*. Reagan had thus managed to win congressional support both for a defensive war against Communism in El Salvador and for an offensive war against Communism in Nicaragua.

Within a year of the vote on military aid, the *contra* policy had proved successful beyond most expectations, although the extent of the threat posed by the *contras* to the survival of the Sandinista regime is still the subject of hot debate. A well-informed Sandinista defector, Major Roger Miranda, believed at the end of 1987 that the war had reached a stalemate. But he also said that if the *contras* could open a front in the urban areas, the Sandinistas could eventually be defeated. If aid had been renewed, the *contras* could have tested that theory.

But it was not to be. By the beginning of 1987, the congressional coalition in support of the *contras* had once again begun to break apart. First came the 1986 congressional elections, when the Republicans lost five seats in the House, as well as control of the Senate. Then the Iran-*contra* scandal that broke in November 1986 covered the *contra* policy with opprobrium and gave the Democrats an opportunity to undermine the foreign policy of a Republican President as an election approached. More significantly, the scandal opened the door for the anti-interventionists in the Democratic party to undo their recent defeat and to launch a counterattack.

This counterattack put great pressure on centrist and conservative Democrats to abandon the pro-*contra* coalition. Yet the core of support for the *contras* within the conservative wing of the Democratic party remained surprisingly strong. By the summer of 1987, the *contra* policy was not nearly so dead as everyone had predicted it would be.

This placed the Speaker of the House, Jim Wright, in a difficult position. He had been a leading member of the pro-democratic, anti-Communist coalition on El Salvador in 1984, and (as everyone, including the liberal wing of his own party, knew) only a *pro-forma* opponent of aid to the *contras* in 1986. But because of the scandal, the impending election, and the unprecedented opportunity to destroy the Republican hold on the presidency, Wright could not let the administration off the hook. Neither, however, could he altogether abandon his fellow Southern conservatives.

This conundrum probably explains why Wright made the deal he did with Reagan in the summer of 1987. Under that deal, Reagan agreed to forgo *contra* aid if the Sandinistas would agree to begin talks with the *contras*, end restrictions on freedoms in Nicaragua, and greatly reduce all ties with the Soviet Union; and Wright agreed implicitly to support *contra* aid if the Sandinistas rejected the deal.

AT THAT point, however, Costa Rica's new president, Oscar Arias, came along to provide Wright with a better answer to his problem. Arias, a committed anti-interventionist, wanted to end U.S. support for the *contras*. To remove the rationale for that intervention, he set out to restore the "mask of democracy" to the face of the Sandinistas. The Arias plan, taking the administration up on its expressed willingness to accept a negotiated settlement that would emphasize democratic reform in Nicaragua, called for such reform at the same time that it called for a cut-off of U.S. aid to the *contras*. But the timing and enforcement of the democratic provisions were vague, which made it easier for the Sandinistas to pretend to comply than the Wright-Reagan agreement did. The latter plan, moreover, had all but committed the Speaker personally to support *contra* aid if the Sandinistas failed to fulfill the terms, while under the Arias plan the only obligation for anyone in the U.S. was to cut off aid to the *contras* at the appropriate moment. Whether Left-liberal Democrats suggested this strategy to Arias, or he suggested it to them, the Arias plan was the best way to defeat Reagan and the *contra* policy without forcing Jim Wright to choose openly between the conservatives and the liberals in his own party. No wonder, then, that Wright abandoned his own peace plan in favor of Arias's.

Yet, for all its attractions, the Arias plan was not easy for the Sandinistas to accept. The plan would require them to go through all the motions of reform in a repetition of the "*tercerista*" strategy that had helped bring them to power in 1979; but this time, fooling the international bourgeoisie would be more difficult than before. Moreover, to change course now might result in the establishment of the internal political opposition the Sandinistas most feared. And even then, how could they be sure that Reagan would not, after all, find a way to finance the war against them?

But the Democrats assured the Sandinistas that even a minimal compliance with the peace agreement would kill *contra* aid, end the war quickly, defeat Reagan, and banish the threat of U.S. intervention once and for all. Conversely, turning down the Arias plan would be the best way to help Reagan. And so the Sandinistas agreed to the Arias plan.

The other three Central American presidents—Duarte, Cerezo, and Azcona—also agreed to the plan, for a variety of somewhat confused reasons. In part, they believed that its democratic provisions satisfied U.S. demands; in part, they believed that the Reagan administration, because of Iran-*contra*, was giving up on the resistance and was

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now willing to negotiate with the Sandinistas; in part, they, like the pro-*contra* Democrats in Congress, had been embarrassed by the Iran-*contra* revelations and were looking for a way to avoid the international opprobrium of having participated not only in a U.S. intervention in Central America, but in an "illegal" one at that.

From the time the Arias plan was adopted, both the Left-liberal Democrats and Jim Wright refrained from criticizing the Sandinistas. Yet after signing the agreement, the Sandinistas violated it by arresting opposition leaders, violently breaking up meetings and rallies, and threatening the reopened newspaper *La Prensa*. At the end of 1987, the Defense Minister, Humberto Ortega, also confirmed Sandinista intentions to build a 600,000-man army, agreements with Cuba and the Soviet Union for future large arms transfers (including Soviet Mig fighters), and plans for the future training and supply of the Salvadoran guerrillas.

Nevertheless, whenever Sandinista behavior stirred efforts in Congress to renew *contra* aid, the Democrats and Arias called for further efforts at peace and argued that now was not the time for military assistance.

What, asked the Washington *Post* editorial page in response to this position, "is Mr. Wright really doing?"

> Mr. Wright fashions himself as a disinterested arbiter, a super-diplomat. Actually, he is the leader of the political element that took the military card out of the hands of the *contras*, even while the Sandinistas' military card remained very much available to them. In his advice to the two sides not to reopen the war, he speaks as one who has the power—and the demonstrated willingness to use it—to enforce his will on the rebels but who has not shown a similar power (or disposition?) to enforce his will on the regime.

The answer to the *Post*'s question was that Wright was doing what he had to, given the decision he had made a year earlier. He was acting as the point man for the liberal-Left faction of his party whose aim throughout the 1980's was to defeat Reagan's pro-democratic, anti-Communist interventionism in Central America and to withdraw U.S. influence from the region. By defeating aid to the *contras*, as he finally did on February 3, 1988, Wright accomplished that goal.

THE saddest part of the whole story is that democracy had come so much farther in the 80's than ever before. If the United States had maintained its support of democracy in Nicaragua, the momentum would have continued; perhaps the political cycle in Latin America might have been broken and democratic regimes might have been firmly established. As things now stand, however, the Communist guerrillas, the right-wing military, and the Noriegas have been given new reason for thinking that the United States is impotent and that the fragile democracies of Latin America are once again ripe for the picking.

For the truth is that few Latin American nations are strong enough to resist these evils without American assistance. That is why the only policy with any chance of success against them is the one that showed so much promise during the Kennedy administration and then under Ronald Reagan—the policy of vigorous intervention on behalf of democracy.

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The Train

A Story

Kelly Cherry

I TELL HER we'd better hurry if she doesn't want to miss the train.

It's late in the day.

I want her to take something with her, I want her to care enough about us to take something with her, some souvenir of her time with us, but the small suitcase I retrieved from the hall closet this morning and placed by her bedside is still empty. There is nothing, she says, that she wants to take with her. No handmade Mother's Day card she has hoarded since our childhood, no photograph or certificate of accomplishment. If she doesn't care about us, how about herself? But she doesn't want jewelry or makeup. How about a book, I ask, a souvenir of civilization? *Civilization*, she snorts. Her contempt is great. She says she is trying to get rid of things, not acquire them.

How stubborn she is, all seventy-eight pounds of her—approximately one pound for each year she has lived. She is intractable, a woman whose lack of sentimentality is more than defensive—it is aggressive, an act of force, hurls, has always hurled itself toward her family like a missile, an MX.

I am sentimental. I don't want her to go, I want her to stay, and I think that when she goes my heart will be ground zero, my chest will be an empty cavity like a shelled-out city, devastated, but I know that she has to go, even if she is frightened and would rather not, and although no matter when we leave we will be on time, I know that, by the same token, we must not be late.

I take my mother by the hand, help her rise and lean into the walker. Next, I help her into the car and place the walker in the trunk.

As I walk around to my side of the car I glance up. Clouds push across the sky like boats across a lake. In their wake come bright breakers of light. This rippling light comes and goes as if the sun is a stone someone is skipping across the blue waters of the sky.

I slip into my seat, to the right of hers. She has gotten out of the glove compartment the small—no bigger than a walnut—brass ashtray that I bought her some years ago. It has a lid, which, though ill-fitting, serves to keep the ashes from falling out. She lifts the lid to flick her cigarette, lets it fall shut again. The ashtray won't hold more than two filtered butts at a time.

At this time of day, the road to Reading is clotted with commuter traffic. We pass the Cunning Man, the pub where my father used to drink a half-pint if my mother was in a mood and refused to fix dinner. In a mood, some nights she announced that hunger was a weakness, food disgusting. If people did not insist on eating, she explained, they would not murder the innocents of the earth, nor would they be so easily victimized by the unintelligent who are in power everywhere.

My father, who died last year, was a sweet-tempered, largely unknown man who revealed streaks of sarcasm and bitterness only on the intermittent occasions when he'd had too much to drink. In his case, the third beer was too much—but my mother seldom let him drink it.

In the seat to my left, she is abstracted. I wonder if she, too, is remembering my father.

For my part, I find that it becomes harder to attend to the present as the past, on the march, swells its ranks, eventually dominating all time. The past has a territorial imperative, a mandate to annex the present. Memories overwhelm us; they grow so numerous that we have no time to think about anything else. They occupy us, like an invading army.

Yes, I am sentimental. I want to let nothing go. I don't want to let *her* go.

What are you thinking about? I ask.

And instead of saying, Avery, she says, Mama.

It has been troubling her that, no matter how hard she tries, she still cannot believe in God the way her mother believed in Him. At seventy-five, she feels guilty that she used to say she was sick in order to stay home from Sunday School to read Grimm's fairy tales. Her mama always made her swallow castor oil, but she now feels that this was not a sufficient expiation. She wants to be six years old again so she can be the little girl her mother wanted, instead of herself. She would go to Sunday School; she would believe every word of the Shorter Catechism.

How, she asks me now, can she fail to share the beliefs of a woman who was perfect? Who was better than perfect, she says, who was *good*. I must be dense, she says. After all this time, I still can't see it. And she has tried, I know this. She recites the Lord's Prayer to herself every night, going over

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it word by word, trying to understand exactly what it meant to her Presbyterian mother.

She is much more concerned with her feeling that she has somehow let her mother down, disappointed her, than she is with *our* feelings. I try to make allowances for this. I don't say it's ludicrous to feel guilt toward someone who's been dead for twenty-seven years. I certainly don't suggest that her perfect mother seems, imperfectly, to have saddled her with a sense of failure. My mother, who, within the limits of her circumstances, defied convention again and again, whose mind was extraordinary, berates herself *not* for not having been able, say, to revise her circumstances, but for her inability to accept the world into which she was born.

Women do this, even unconventional women.

Her plight, its similarity to mine, to other women's, moves me. I am flooded with feeling—and know that she would have no use for it, would consider it a weakness. I want to touch her, but I am afraid to. Touching has never been permitted, beyond hello, good-bye. There have never been congratulatory hugs, comforting pats on the head, reassuring arms around shoulders or even admonitory wrist taps. I try to do well what I'm allowed to do—I listen.

Her mother, she says, still on that subject, never missed a Sunday in her life. But because she was perfect, she wasn't forbidding, was never too-strict or sour. She was fun-loving and sensual—though "sensual" is not my mother's word—petite and auburn-haired; she loved to sing and dance, just as she loved to begin each day with a Bible reading around the kitchen stove. Obadiah and oatmeal, early every morning.

THE clouds have lifted, and now, as often happens in England, there is a late-day reprieve from existential gloom, a sky like British empiricism, clear and comprehensible, uncontinental. For a few moments, as we inch our way out of the car into the station, it is almost hot, or at least we are almost too warm, in our long sleeves and wool coats, beads of perspiration creeping out from under our arms like secrets desirous of being told. Then dusk, slowly at first and then more quickly, begins to steal the warmth from the air.

The station itself is cold, like a meat locker. I feel the cold concrete under my shoes' soles, the walls sweat like meat, damp leather and fur coats give off a dead-animal smell. On the first platform inside the gate, people bench-sit, warming their fingers around styrofoam cups of steaming milk-thick tea.

She stands in her walker, a sailor in her ship's crow's nest ready to shout ahoy, while I step over to the sweets counter and load up on Cadbury's. It's the one thing I can be sure she'll eat—she likes her chocolate.

Now starts the long struggle down stairs and through the underground passage to emerge on the other side of the tracks. This part of our journey consumes a great deal of time and energy. By the time we are on the relevant platform, the 5:06 to Paddington—the train my parents used to take to London when they were going up for a concert—has left the station. More trains enter and leave—at this hour, the service between Reading and London is intense.

None of these trains is the one we are waiting for. My mother sits on a bench, nibbling chocolate. She breaks a tiny, dainty piece off from the bar and scrapes a few slivers from it with her teeth and swallows them, her hand in front of her mouth as she swallows because she does not like anyone to see her eating, ever.

In the past few weeks, I have had to bathe her, help her to the commode chair, hoist her on and off the seat. I know exactly how thin she is—as insubstantial as if she were her own silhouette. I know that her buttocks are as small and pointed as elbows. I know that her skin, turned to parchment by cortisone, will barely stretch across her body without tearing. She will eat a six-minute soft-boiled egg if it is served just so; otherwise, she subsists on cocoa and candy bars. Her hazel-green eyes have ghosted into gray, clouded by failing vision. She is almost deaf. All her senses are withdrawing from the world, pulling away—as if her body is finally concurring in the conclusion her mind drew long ago, that the world was not worthy of her attention.

I want to say something to her, I want her to talk to me, but she just sits there eating Cadbury's, while the station empties. Pretty soon we are almost the only ones left on the platform, and it's dark now, electric lights shining in the newsstand, the miniature cafeteria.

Don't you miss Daddy? I suddenly ask her. The question flies out of me as if it has wings, as if my mouth is a sprung cage. I stand there astonished, gaping, imagining my question on the loose, on the lam like an escaped canary. My tongue feels thick, too big in my mouth, it feels like feathers, I can't get another word out, I'm thinking she has a right to be angry with me, offended. I am presumptuous.

But I don't dare ask her what I really want to ask her. Asking her if she misses him, what I want is for her to answer what I'm really asking her. What I am really asking her is if she will please say something to me that proves that all this caring, all this loving and losing and missing of one another that we all do, means something, that it's not just incidental feelings that happen to go along with events that happen to happen. I think she ought to know. I think she's lived long enough to know.

I want to hear my mother say that my father was not just a random factor, that he was an essential part of the equation of her life. She is licking her fingers. She is in no mood for metaphor. Metaphor is not what is real to her at this point.

Mama, she says, sighing, Mama was so pleased with me for marrying him, even if she did act

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matter-of-fact about it. Mama never let anything ruffle her. She took me downtown and bought me a trousseau for twenty-five dollars. And Papa was ecstatic—his little Eleanore was marrying a violinist! Eleanore and Avery would play their violins, and they would never have to resort to mere language for conversation—that was pretty much my Papa's idea of heaven, so he thought it *was* a marriage made in heaven. But Mama approved of my choice because he was a Presbyterian. There, you see, she says sharply, wiping her hand on the front of her coat, even Avery was able to believe. I am sure that he did, even though he would never talk about something so personal. He was just like Papa in that—wouldn't talk about anything like that. She is folding the foil and colored wrapper around the remainder of the candy bar, sticking it in her pocket, without looking at what she is doing. What if they are all together and don't want me with them? What if I'm not permitted to join Mama? She starts to cry but stops. It would be just like the God of this world, wouldn't it, she says, sarcasm pulling her face into a hard mask, setting her features like cement, to make heaven, if there is a heaven, a club for believers.

Her eyes fill up again, puddles in her face. I hope Mama will forgive me, she says, for not living up to her expectations.

I look at those gray eyes and say, I'm sure she forgave you a long time ago.

Her face settles back into itself and an intent waiting.

It's as if my father has lost his connection to her as husband, even in memory, and is important only as someone who once had an effect on her relationship to her parents. He was one of their sons-in-law, that's all.

Now the train is coming, it is a zipper pulling into the station on the seams of the tracks. She hauls herself up into her walker and starts to stumble toward the train. Wait, I tell her; there's plenty of time, they won't leave without you, but she is afraid that she won't make it to a smoking car, she has to get on a smoking car.

We find a smoking car and the conductor helps us get her on. I want to get on too, settle her in her seat, but he says, No time, no time.

And he is telling the truth, for when I look around, I discover, much to my amazement, that the station, which had been deserted, has filled up again, passengers are clambering aboard, so many many passengers where have they come from, and then what is happening becomes clear to me in a way that I had refused to let it be clear before, as I look down the length of the train, toward the engine, and I see face after face that is dear to me, all the lost people of my time, the missing souls.

And now I am frantic, my heart feels as if it is going to explode, it is a time bomb that has been rigged in my chest.

She is by a window, staring forward. I run to the window and stand on tiptoe and knock on the pane. She turns to me and smiles distantly and turns back, staring ahead. The sleek body of the train is cold fire under my palms as I lean into it, as cold as her flesh. She's not even looking at me but I pull away and throw myself into a pantomime, waving don't go, and then I am shouting don't go, and it's all happening too fast—how can things be happening so fast? While we were waiting, everything seemed to be in slow motion, but now it has all speeded up and though I am shouting, though I am crying and calling to her, no one is paying any attention to me, they are all busy busy busy, the conductors must keep things orderly orderly orderly say the wheels.

No time, luv, no time.

The engine is starting, the train is like a long, lighted tube sliding through the station, and I reach for the door but it's too late, the train is leaving and my mother is on that train, she is going away, she is not even interested in staying. Children, what are children? Afterthoughts, by-products. . . . Late, they arrive too late on the scene to be of consequence. She had prior commitments and she is going to meet them.

How dark it is, the train streaming out of the station into the night like a river rushing into the ocean! All at once, there is nothing—only the thin whistle of wind as it falls back from the outbound train, the dull echo of my heels on the concrete platform.

She is gone.

It's over.

I am completely alone on the platform. Not one other person remains.

I look around and suddenly I feel vulnerable. This is not a safe place to be, I realize. Not safe. I start down the stairs, to cross over to the exit.

It's so dark in the tunnel, I scurry through it like a mouse. I want to be with people, I want to talk with someone before her goneness becomes more real than her going-away. I want to review her going-away again and again so I won't have to feel her goneness. I want to talk to someone who will listen to me as I try to convince myself that it's not possible that someone who existed can not exist. I will say I believe it's not possible that we have been sent on a journey to nowhere, and the way there is marked more by farewells than welcomings.

Such a long, sad journey—and she is taking it by herself, on that train, next to the window. As I leave the station, my used bystander's ticket crumpled in my pocket, I think how brave she is, how brave we all are, people, all of us people alone and dying, now and forever alone, brave beyond belief.

I don't say any of this to anyone. There is no one to say it to, and if there were, I still wouldn't say it. It is too personal. I get in the car, in the parking lot, and turn the ignition on. The small brass ashtray, one butt, is sitting on the ledge in front of her seat on my left. I put it away in the glove compartment. She took nothing with her.

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Alger Hiss: A Glimpse Behind the Mask

Eric M. Breindel

Devotees of the Hiss case have long hoped—and thought it conceivable—that Alger Hiss would one day share his version of that historic episode with the American people. Hence the eagerness with which many awaited his autobiography, which has now finally appeared under the title *Recollections of a Life.**

Hiss, previously a high State Department official, a member of the U.S. delegation at Yalta, and secretary general of the founding conference of the United Nations, was president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in 1948 when he was accused of having been a secret Communist during the 1930's. His accuser was Whittaker Chambers, a senior editor at *Time* magazine and a self-confessed former member of the American Communist underground.

Hiss denied the charge—which had been made under immunity before the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC)—and sued for slander when Chambers repeated the allegations on a national radio program. But Chambers soon upped the ante, charging Hiss not just with membership in a secret cell, but with having regularly passed on classified State Department documents for delivery to the Soviets.

A grand jury was convened. Chambers produced microfilm of documents he said Hiss had given him, as well as handwritten summaries of cables, which Hiss acknowledged were in his own handwriting. The statute of limitations on espionage having expired, Hiss was indicted for perjury, the slander suit was rendered moot, and Hiss was tried, convicted, and sentenced to prison.

It was not necessary to disbelieve the story told by Chambers—first at the perjury trials and then in *Witness,* his autobiography—to hope Hiss would some day offer his own version of the case. Indeed, Chambers's description of a Communist underground in New Deal Washington—an underground that sought both to deliver secret information to the Soviets and to place clandestine Communists in high places—has always been hard to disbelieve. Virtually every time a relevant FBI document has been declassified, and every time a new witness has emerged, a new part of Chambers's original story has been reconfirmed, and his overall credibility strengthened.

Nevertheless, Chambers was able to report only his own version. And there were many who thought that Hiss, without confessing to espionage, might eventually decide to volunteer additional information, if only to respond to questions that even his supporters viewed as unanswered—if only to leave, for history's sake, a fuller version of the events that defined his life than *In the Court of Public Opinion,* the dry and unenlightening treatment of the trials he produced after his release from prison in 1954.

The questions that even Hiss's supporters hoped an autobiographical account by him might answer are many and varied. For even though Hiss's absolute innocence has over the years become a matter of received wisdom on the liberal-Left, many in the Hiss camp in 1948—including key members of his legal team—were convinced that he was holding something back.

For example, a good number of Hiss's supporters deemed utterly incredible his claim not to have remembered Chambers until the much-celebrated personal confrontation orchestrated by Congressman Richard M. Nixon. During that confrontation, Hiss found it necessary to inspect Chambers's teeth before identifying him as "George Crosley"—a man to whom, by his own testimony, Hiss had given a car, the use of an apartment, a valuable rug, an introduction to a family physician, and much, much more.

No wonder, then, that even Charles Dollard, the president of the Carnegie Corporation—who was close enough to Hiss to have accompanied him to the HUAC-staged confrontation with Chambers—later told Hiss's attorneys that he "does not believe Alger stole the documents, but he also does not believe Alger has told all he knows about his relations with Chambers." And that was directly after the initial Hiss-Chambers confrontation, when the case was still very young and when hardly any evidence documenting the ties between the two men had as yet been introduced. Dollard's view, moreover, was shared by a great number of Hiss associates, including William Marbury, Hiss's lawyer in the slander suit, and Edward McLean, who organized the defense team after Hiss was indicted for perjury.

Even a recent study decidedly sympathetic to Hiss—*A Tissue of Lies: Nixon versus Hiss*—argues that Hiss lied about the nature of his relationship with Chambers. The authors, Morton Levitt and Michael Levitt, do not believe that Hiss was guilty of espionage. But they—like Marbury and McLean, and like Hiss's State Department

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* Holt, 240 pp., $19.95.

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mentor Francis B. Sayre—see ample evidence of a connection with Chambers far more intimate than Hiss has ever been willing to acknowledge.

There were many theories in the Hiss camp as to what he was holding back and why. Some observers looked beyond the mysterious Hiss-Chambers relationship for answers, and concluded that Hiss was shielding his wife, Priscilla (who died in 1986). Marbury and McLean apparently leaned toward this view, which turned on the premise that Priscilla Hiss was the "real" Communist. Hiss's friend and counselor, Secretary of State Dean Acheson, also apparently suspected Priscilla.

There were, to be sure, some Hiss supporters who—while recognizing that Hiss was concealing the nature and extent of his ties to Chambers—refused to believe that either Alger *or* Priscilla Hiss had ever had anything to do with Communism and/or espionage. For this group, the most popular theory at the time of the case was that Hiss was hiding a homosexual relationship with his accuser. This relationship, it was thought, might have enabled Chambers—somehow—to "frame" Hiss.

Also popular was the theory that Alger Hiss's stepson, Timothy Hobson, who had been discharged from the Navy as a homosexual shortly before the Hiss-Chambers controversy broke, had in some way been involved with Chambers during the 1930's. Hobson, it should be noted, would have been twelve years old at the time of these alleged contacts, and a relationship between the boy and Chambers still would not explain how Chambers had secured classified State Department documents. Yet for those unwilling, as a matter of principle, to credit Chambers's tale of Communism and espionage, even the most improbable scenarios were attractive.

In any event, it was on this question—the true nature of Hiss's relationship with Chambers—that many Hiss supporters, as well as others interested in the case, hoped Alger Hiss would one day elaborate. In *Recollections of a Life*, however, Hiss offers nothing at all new about his ties to Chambers. Instead, to account for Chambers's motive in seeking to destroy him, Hiss embraces the theory—which he first advanced in an interview with the historian C. Vann Woodward in 1959—that Chambers was a homosexual *spurned*.

This notion, too, was popular in the Hiss camp during and immediately after the trials. A sort of cousin to the idea that the two men actually had a homosexual relationship, the "spurned homosexual" theory was a special favorite of two other Hiss lawyers, Harold Rosenwald and Lloyd Paul Stryker. Yet even while embracing this theory, Hiss today continues to insist that he does not remember Chambers making homosexual advances toward him. This creates an obvious problem: if the intimacy existed only in Chambers's mind, the theory does not really explain anything—not how Chambers came to know Hiss so well; not how he got his hands on the documents; nothing.

It is a fact—and one which was known to government authorities, and to the Hiss defense team, at the time of the trials—that Chambers struggled with homosexuality during the 1930's. Chambers's homosexual history has also been documented in Allen Weinstein's *Perjury*, the major scholarly study of the case. Yet if Hiss was no more than the object of Chambers's unfulfilled desires, the theory does little for Hiss's effort to demonstrate his innocence. All it does is besmirch Chambers's reputation. It is, in other words, a classic exercise in "gay-baiting."

If *Recollections of a Life* fails to shed new light on the Hiss-Chambers relationship, what of the other questions on which both supporters and opponents hoped Alger Hiss might some day elaborate: first and foremost, politics?

When did Hiss turn toward the hard Left? If he was a party-line Communist during the 1930's, did he ever break with Communism? What was Hiss's political orientation at the time of the trials? Has it changed since then? If so, how?

There have always been observers who accepted that Hiss was a leftist during the 1930's, even a secret Communist, but who rejected the notion that he had ever been a spy. It was as a secret Communist, according to this reading, that Hiss came to know Chambers; and it was Hiss's unwillingness to be candid about his political past in the cold-war climate of 1948 that led to his downfall.

During the period in which Hiss admits he knew Chambers, the latter was a Communist courier, organizer, and political "commissar." This is beyond dispute. From the private correspondence (discovered by Allen Weinstein) of the writer Josephine Herbst to the public testimony of former Communists like Lee Pressman and Nathaniel Weyl, evidence that Chambers told the truth about his work for Moscow has long been overwhelming. Even Hiss's lawyers, in the course of their pre-trial research, came to the conclusion that Chambers had indeed been an underground Communist during the 30's in Washington.

Nor was Chambers the only secret Communist among Alger Hiss's friends and acquaintances at the time. There was Pressman, as well as Nathan Witt, Noel Field, Henry Collins, and many others. Hiss has maintained that he never discussed the subject of Communism with any of these men, all of whom eventually ceased to conceal their Communist sympathies. This claim by Hiss is even less credible than the story he told about his acquaintance with "George Crosley."

Its absurdity is underscored by an insightful passage in a recently published study of the New Deal, *Dealers and Dreamers*, by the late Joseph P. Lash. In that passage, Lash describes the reluctance of underground Communists at the National Labor Relations Board to obey the party's directive that they remain clandestine and politically inconspicuous:

> He [cell leader Victor Perlo] instructed the cell's members to be "extremely inconspicuous" in regard to their political beliefs and to stay away from the mass organizations. The undergrounders did not like that. They wanted to be active. They had become

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Communists out of a belief that the party fought harder than any other group for a better world, and now, as Communists, they were asked to be less active than ever.

Needless to say, the "undergrounders" did comply. But if they could not take part in mass rallies, the least the secret Communists inside the government could do was discuss the issues that mattered to them in private conversations with like-minded friends.

Some of these men—Lee Pressman and Nathan Witt, for example—had been Hiss's friends since Harvard Law School. Henry Collins and Hiss went back even further, all the way to boyhood and summer camp. Yet Hiss asks us to believe that he never even *discussed* the subject of Communism with any of them. In other words, he never—then or later—asked his lifelong friend Henry Collins why Collins had left government service to head up the pro-Soviet American-Russian Institute. And Hiss purports never to have asked Noel Field why Field had left the State Department to live in Europe, where he worked for the League of Nations and became an open Communist.

By 1948, this entire group—all those named by Chambers, save for Hiss—were "out of the closet" and functioning openly within the ambit of the Communist party. A few—John Abt and Victor Perlo, for example—do so to this day. There are some on the Left—Noel Field's brother, Hermann Field, for one—who have argued Hiss went too far during his legal ordeal in dissociating himself from the political idealism of the New Deal era. A book by Hiss in the autumn of his life—he is eighty-four years old and nearly blind—might have been an opportunity for him to unburden himself about the ties he felt he had to hide in 1948. But this is not that book.

About Hiss's politics in the years subsequent to 1938—which is when Chambers broke with Communism (and, of necessity, with Hiss)—we know next to nothing. We do not know whether Hiss remained committed to Communism, or—if he did—for how long.

At the time of the trials, there were quasi-sympathizers of Hiss like former Assistant Secretary of State Adolf A. Berle, Jr. who believed Hiss's problems stemmed largely from an effort to cover up a brief, youthful flirtation with radical politics. In Berle's words, "Frankly, I still don't know whether this is the boy that got in deep and then pulled clear, or what goes on here."

Or was Hiss still a Communist when he went to Yalta with FDR in 1945? If so, this would explain Andrei Gromyko's surprising willingness to let an American (Hiss) serve as secretary general of the UN founding conference in San Francisco.

A tantalizing piece published in the *Daily Worker,* the Communist-party newspaper, during the 1948 HUAC hearing suggests that Hiss, at least by then, had left the Communist orbit: "Here is a young man who, whatever one may think about his present enthusiasm for . . . the cold war, performed a highly useful service for his country during the New Deal and particularly during the war." The implication here is plain: he used to be one of us (perhaps even during the war), but is no longer. This, if true, leaves the question of when Hiss—to use Adolf Berle's construction—"pulled clear."

One passage in one newspaper article does not, to be sure, constitute proof. And it may be that Hiss never really did leave the fold, that the anti-Communist posture he struck while under investigation was a disingenuous pose, and nothing more. Certainly the Hiss defense, as Allen Weinstein has demonstrated, received significant clandestine assistance from Communist circles during the trials, including access to *Daily Worker* corporate records. (Chambers had once worked for the paper.)

After his release from prison in 1954, Hiss seemed to move leftward in a gradual way, picking up steam—not surprisingly—during the 1960's, as the political climate changed. He grew comfortable in the Old Left circles to which he had long professed no connection. But he asserted publicly that these were *new* links, that he—like many others—had merely been radicalized by Nixon and Vietnam.

Today, he no longer bothers to hide his contacts with party members, past or present. Hiss's current lawyers come from the world of the National Lawyers Guild and the National Emergency Committee on Civil Liberties,* and many of them were involved in representing Communists during the 1950's. They are a rather different lot from the Debevoise and Plimpton, Covington & Burling battery that handled Hiss's affairs in 1948.

But even with respect to his politics during the grim post-jail years, *Recollections of a Life* is a disappointment. There is no attempt to explain the radicalization Hiss purportedly underwent during the 50's and 60's, any more than there is an effort by Hiss, earlier on, to flesh out his version of the manifestly mysterious relationship with Chambers.

It is all the more surprising, then, that *Recollections of a Life* does manage to shed some new light on the character and world view of Alger Hiss.

Not with respect to the case itself: only a small part of the book is devoted to the events of 1948, and in these sections, Hiss relies heavily on the reader's ignorance of the actual facts. To cite only one of many examples: in discussing the handwritten documents produced by Chambers, Hiss refers to them as "Four small scratchpad sheets of my penciled notes, which I used in briefing my superior, Francis Sayre, about selected cables." Hiss fails to mention that the "notes" were, for all practical purposes, verbatim transcripts of cables. Nor does he point out that Sayre, in 1948, professed no recollection of the briefing system Hiss describes, and no recollection of the issues treated in the cables.

What is new in these pages is Hiss's willingness, for the first

*An offshoot of the ACLU, formed in the early 1950's by those who felt the parent group was not doing enough on behalf of Communists under investigation.

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time, to offer a glimpse at his view of the history of the 20th century. At isolated moments, while treating historical matters, including events in which he took part, Hiss seems to drop his guard—to say what he really thinks.

Thus, in a chapter entitled "Stalin, the Enigmatic Host at Yalta," Hiss argues that the Soviet dictator demonstrated not just "surprising geniality as [a] host," but also a "conciliatory attitude as [a] negotiator." According to Hiss, no one today remembers that "we, the Americans . . . [made] all the requests" at Yalta, and that "except for Poland, our requests were finally granted on our own terms."

Hiss never tells us what he thinks happened with regard to Poland, and he does acknowledge that Stalin made demands of his own at the conference. But these, Hiss says, came only after we pressed Moscow to enter the war against Japan: "The initiative had been ours—we had urgently asked him to come to our aid." Nor does Hiss detail the "concessions" Stalin thereupon asked for and got.

No other American participant at Yalta has offered so sympathetic an assessment of Stalin's role. Conversely, in a similar vein, Hiss sees the cold war in general as a consequence of American belligerence: "Roosevelt's death and the less conciliatory foreign policy of the Truman administration did change the historic mix at a crucial moment."

Another fascinating glimpse into the real Alger Hiss comes toward the end of the book. There, in a discussion that fairly reeks of disingenuousness, Hiss examines his own failure to produce the history of the New Deal he had long hoped to write. In the course of trying to produce this would-be magnum opus, Hiss ran into a "major problem." He realized that the New Deal had not been a complete success:

> We New Dealers knew that we had not cured the Depression in the sense that our reforms would prevent its return; our efforts did not ensure a fuller life for all Americans. It was not our reforms but the coming of World War II that really cut back unemployment. . . . The realities of history diminished my enthusiasm [for the project]. . . .

The view that only a war economy can save a capitalist society from what Hiss calls "alternating glut and scarcity" is the ABC of Marxism-Leninism. And there is also something "Marxist" about the very fact of dropping an academic undertaking because it refuses to confirm a preconceived thesis. Once again, it would seem, we have—if only briefly—Hiss without the mask.

On the personal front, *Recollections of a Life* offers us the familiar, even-tempered Alger Hiss, a man devoid of any sense of outrage, even while claiming that a miscarriage of justice destroyed his life. This very trait—Hiss's failure to act like a man who has been wronged—has helped persuade some observers over the years that he must, indeed, have been guilty as charged. One acquaintance—who spoke to Hiss by telephone the morning after Chambers first testified—later wrote that Hiss sounded like someone who had "prepared himself for years for the moment when the story would break." The acquaintance was a man who had reason to know about such things: Michael Straight. It would emerge many years later that Straight, one-time owner of the *New Republic* and an FDR speechwriter, had himself been recruited for secret work by the Soviets.

In *Recollections of a Life,* we find Hiss discussing his new, post-prison career as a stationery sales man much as he might have described his appointment, say, to the post of Secretary of State: "I enjoyed the work, with its technical challenges and the variety of men and women I met in the offices. . . . My experience . . . at Lewisburg stood me in good stead in coping with the great number of standard stationery items." (Hiss had worked in the storerooms while in the federal penitentiary at Lewisburg.) He reports with pride that a stationery-industry official, commenting on his sales efforts, said he "had not seen the city covered so thoroughly since the Great Depression." And Hiss insists that while working in his new field, he always held to principle:

> I didn't take my customers to lunch or give them whiskey and flowers at Christmas. Notwithstanding my unorthodoxy in these matters, I developed a loyal list of friendly customers. Before long, I was able to achieve some success in my life as a salesman.

In his personal aspect, clearly, Alger Hiss is stiff, dogged, unemotional—and very tough. So tough, indeed, that it becomes easier and easier to understand how, in spite of everything, he stood his ground, held to his absurd story, and never cracked—not in court; not in jail; not while unemployed; and not during his gray days as a stationery salesman (before he became a late-60's campus hero).

But is he still a Communist? It is impossible to know for certain, but my own guess is that he never left the party, and that at every turn in his life he served the cause as best he could. In the Roosevelt administration, this meant passing documents. From 1948 on, it meant posing as an "American Dreyfus." Now it means he must stand fast, which is exactly what he does in this book.

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Out of It

REMEMBERING AMERICA. By RICHARD N. GOODWIN. *Little, Brown. 543 pp. $19.95.*

Reviewed by MIDGE DECTER

FOR many people—indeed, probably for most of us—the 1960's in retrospect seem not so much an actual series of years as a drama of rapidly changing consciousness. And it would be hard to think of anyone who better exemplified that drama than Richard N. Goodwin. A brilliant young law student, clerk to Justice Felix Frankfurter; a staunch New Frontiersman; a knight-errant of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society; a late-60's convert to the anti-Vietnam peace movement; first a campaigner for Eugene McCarthy in the New Hampshire snows of 1968, then a springtime loyalist of Bobby Kennedy; and finally a denizen in good standing of the Northeastern literary-intellectual world, whence he gave voice to his anxiety that America was losing its noble aspirations—in something like eight years he went through the entire gamut of "respectable" commitments.

Now he has produced his memoir of the period, which for him really came to an end, he tells us, "in a Los Angeles hospital on June 6, 1968"—the night of Bobby Kennedy's death. Reading *Remembering America*, one is slightly shocked to remind oneself that a baby born on June 6, 1968 could by now have entered his last year of college, and that a child celebrating his tenth birthday then might under present circumstances be working on his tenth million. To be sure, recognizing the passing of the years is always a little shocking, but in Goodwin's case what adds to the experience is his own utter lack of distance from what he is writing about. No recollection in tranquillity here: with neither ambition cooled nor animus mellowed, with no alteration of the author's angle of vision brought about by an intervening two decades' worth of being alive, *Remembering America* could just as easily have been written in July 1968.

In this as well, Goodwin is apparently not altogether unrepresentative. Judging from the hot and fresh response to his portrait of the long-departed Lyndon Johnson—excerpted in the New York *Times Magazine*—there are an awful lot of people who are still very far from reaching a tranquil settlement either with Johnson's presidency or with the war he inherited and failed to win.

In addition to the undigestedness of the substance of Goodwin's account, there is something unconsidered and undistilled about his prose. Goodwin was, of course, a speechwriter, and a highly regarded one, trusted by Lyndon Johnson to produce many of his more historic statements. Yet here is a man who has had a most interesting life, who has been intimate with a number of most interesting people, who is himself a most interesting person—as I, having known him well during those years, can attest—and still even after twenty years of being and doing other things, he somehow cannot get down off the old Washington tiptoes. When he left the White House, he wrote a memo of explanation to his colleague Bill Moyers, in which he said, "All my inclinations—in fact my most ardent desires—are for a life where I can express and develop myself beyond anything I can gain from staying here." In theory at least, those desires were realized, and yet in this whole book there is barely an observation, whether of an event, an issue, or an individual, that is permitted to cross the boundaries of established public convention; as Woody Allen would say, there is not a cliché left unturned. In short, *Remembering America* is 543 pages of high-intensity presidential speechwriting.

THE heroes of the story are, predictably, John and Robert Kennedy, but they are not so much heroic as protean: cool, hot, tough, tender, brave, cautious, daring, prudent, impatient, long-suffering, lusty, sensitive, sober, witty. Goodwin has nothing to tell about either of them that we have not heard a hundred times already, either from loyal retainers or from enamored journalists. The main villains, interestingly enough, are the three major figures who made the transition with Goodwin from the Kennedy to the Johnson administration—Robert S. McNamara, McGeorge Bundy, and Dean Rusk. Rusk, guilty in Goodwin's eyes only of cowardice and passivity, is to him the least villainous. But toward McNamara and Bundy the real animus is expressed in a tone that carries little sound of policy disagreement and much that smacks of wounded *amour-propre*. Not too long after arriving in Kennedy's White House, Goodwin was banished from there and sent packing to the State Department, where, inevitably, his wings were clipped. Perhaps, as so many are wont to do, he alibied his President by blaming McNamara and Bundy for his demotion.

As for Lyndon Johnson, the brouhaha occasioned by the excerpt in the *Times Magazine* notwithstanding, he is not one of the author's villains. He is something more disagreeable—the object of the author's unbelievably fatuous patronage. Goodwin might be hard put to find a President, with the possible exception of Ronald Reagan, who did not wind up brooding about the people who were trying to do him in; John F. Kennedy, we know, dealt with his critics in the media by trying to get them fired. But Goodwin feared, he says, that Johnson was literally insane because of his obsessive pre-

MIDGE DECTER *is executive director of the Committee for the Free World. Her books include* The Liberated Woman & Other Americans, The New Chastity, *and* Liberal Parents, Radical Children.

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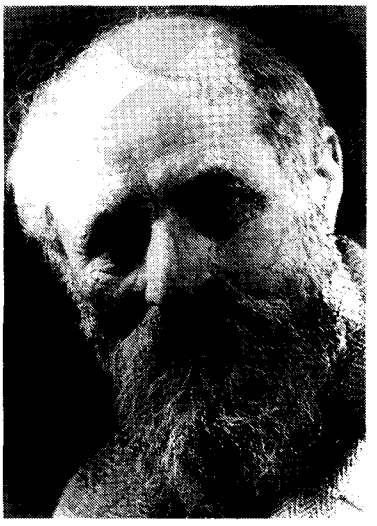

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occupation with his leftist enemies and his belief that they were conspiring against him. Goodwin secretly consulted psychiatrists—who, lo and behold, spoke to him of clinical paranoia. And even when he attempts to evoke Johnson's personal magnitude and force, which were famously of epic proportion, he cannot manage to do better than relay all those by now weary anecdotes that were once the meat and drink of the Washington press corps.

SETTING aside the question of the accuracy and reliability of all this—there are one or two rather serious omissions about the whens and whats and whys of Goodwin's record—*Remembering America* does bring up something interesting to consider, namely, the nature of life and work in the White House. It is a subject that cuts right to the heart of such eternally fascinating issues as loyalty, power, selflessness, discretion, and ambition.

Why is it that so many of those who, like Goodwin, are privileged to enjoy a great deal of conferred and reflected power, eventually become so careless of the obligation not only to be, but to *feel*, loyal?

No administration in living memory, or perhaps ever, has been so violated by men of high trust as the Reagan administration. With one morally appalling bid for bestsellerdom after another, they have not even waited for their President to leave office. David Stockman, Michael Deaver, Donald Regan—not to mention the leakers, the below-stairs gossips storing up IOU's from the journalists for future collection, and the eternal Washingtonians prepared to trade a drop or two of honor for an invitation to dinner in Georgetown—one day either will or will not confront their own private consciences. But in either case, it must be said for these people, as for Richard Goodwin, that in the White House they find themselves in a problematic situation not of their own making.

They are ambitious men, accomplished men, put into a situation where they are offered the opportunity, in a much-used phrase, "to make a difference," and who are at the same time utterly unaccountable for the consequences of "the difference" they succeed in making. This is a terrible temptation: who would not succumb to the attractions of power without accountability? Only a very high degree of personal affection or self-effacing admiration for one's leader—such as John F. Kennedy inspired to an almost unnatural extent and Lyndon Johnson did in many people (though obviously not in Richard Goodwin) and Ronald Reagan for some strange reason does hardly at all—prevents the White House from becoming an every-man-for-himself political chaos.

This problem is very vividly illustrated in Goodwin's book. Not that he was ever seen to be a publicly disloyal presidential aide (at least not while he was in the White House; afterward, of course, he and many colleagues who came to be opponents of the Vietnam war pretended that it was all Lyndon Johnson's doing). But he breezily tells us how he was given the job of devising a Latin American policy for the Kennedy administration; how he named this policy the Alliance for Progress; how he then junketed around the region for a bit of on-the-job training, in the process holding a late-night unauthorized conversation with Che Guevara, and smuggling some Havana cigars for his boss. It is not a particularly edifying story. Perhaps there was some serious intention in it all, though Goodwin does not manage to make it sound that way. He uses a lot of wonderful words, like "new relationship" and "democracy" and "progress," but really, if he had to be remembered for something, would he in hindsight want it to be his record with respect to Latin America? Naturally he would say, as the unaccountable always say: the policy was killed—was that my fault?

Another example is his role as the articulator of Lyndon Johnson's wish simply to put an end to poverty and racism. Perhaps both he and the President could have been forgiven at the time for not recognizing that they did not know how to go about realizing this ambition. But after all, in the end it was not Richard Goodwin's problem, anyway—not really. It was Lyndon Johnson and a lot of local officials who took the heat and suffered the failure. Richard Goodwin could go away, as he did, and twenty years later write a book which he concludes by saying: "That dream"—need we say which?—"is a simple one, at least it can be simply stated: a society in which all would have a chance to share in growing abundance; a land without huge inequalities of wealth or fixed class divisions; a nation that promised each individual not a certain income, but the opportunity to achieve to the limits of his capacities." He is, however, distressed because during the twenty years since the events he has described, "we have abandoned this pursuit. . . ."

Beneath the intellectually embarrassing drum-roll of that passage, he means to suggest that ever since he and people like him have left Washington, the country has ceased to be a decent place. But after what we have witnessed, and gone through, and learned, and unlearned—about poverty and many other things—in the past two decades, a man who can speak in this manner without blushing is someone who has truly been out of it for a long time, and in more ways than one.

Riot and Response

THE YEAR AFTER THE RIOTS: AMERICAN RESPONSES TO THE PALESTINE CRISIS OF 1929-30. By NAOMI W. COHEN. *Wayne State University Press. 204 pp. $24.95.*

Reviewed by MICHAEL LEWIS

SOME 130 Jews, including eight Americans, are slaughtered during a week of Arab rioting in Palestine. In both Britain and the United States, amid dire predictions about the bleak future of a Jewish homeland, the riots are blamed on unsatisfied Arab political and economic grievances. As the State Department looks on benignly, the British embark upon a policy of placating the Arabs by breaking

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commitments made to the Jews. American Jewry, divided and disorganized, and apprehensive over homegrown anti-Semitism, offers a disjointed and ineffectual response to British actions and American inaction. Some American Jews even abandon the goal of a Jewish national home and instead advocate a binational solution in Palestine.

Although these events evoke certain contemporary parallels, they in fact occurred between August 1929 and October 1930. How Americans and particularly how American Jews responded to the Arab riots of those years is the focus of Naomi Cohen's absorbing and timely new book, *The Year After the Riots: American Responses to the Palestine Crisis of 1929-30.*

Mrs. Cohen, a longtime professor at Hunter College and the author of a number of important studies in 20th-century American Jewish history, begins by providing a thumbnail sketch of the key developments of the period. She notes that while the immediate cause for the disturbances was Arab anger at Jews praying at the Western Wall, the riots in fact arose after a long period of Arab discontent. They underscored the contradictory nature of Britain's pledge to Jews and Arabs: was Palestine to be the Jewish national home, or was its Arab majority to be granted self-rule? After the riots, ostensibly to examine their root causes but in reality to whitewash British and Arab responsibility, the British government appointed a commission of inquiry. Its report, issued at the end of March 1930, duly traced the events to Arab political and economic frustration, supposedly caused by Jewish immigration and unfair economic advantage in Palestine.

A second commission of inquiry, appointed to investigate economic conditions in Palestine, recommended in October 1930 that Jewish immigration be curbed. Simultaneously with the publication of this report, the British government issued a white paper endorsing the commission's findings and establishing limits on Jewish immigration and land settlements. It is with this milestone that Mrs. Cohen concludes her study. In a brief postscript she explains that although the British subsequently retreated somewhat in the face of Jewish protests, in the long run policy did not really change.

WHEN it comes to American responses to the riots, her real subject, Mrs. Cohen focuses first on the State Department—at that time, as she writes, a small, elitist institution under strong Protestant missionary influence and permeated by anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism. Even though there were several Americans among those who died in the riots, and even though American Jews and a number of Congressmen were urging the Department to act, it refused to take up the Zionists' case. Instead, inclining toward the British and Arab positions, the Department attributed the Arab riots to Jewish provocation. The only thing restraining the Department from offering even greater support for British policies and Arab goals was a directive that the United States avoid being drawn into the dispute. Whatever American pressure on the British might or might not have accomplished, the absence of such pressure certainly bolstered Britain's anti-Zionist policies.

Mrs. Cohen proceeds to examine the response to the riots of American Jewry, a response which was eagerly attended to by Jews around the world, including in Palestine itself. That response was incoherent and for the most part ineffectual, hamstrung by internal disunity and by the dearth of non-Jewish support. American Jews were divided between a non-Zionist majority and a Zionist minority which was itself fragmented by personal and interorganizational disputes. Prominent Zionists like Louis Brandeis remained aloof from the organized movement, in part because of an internal power struggle.

The Zionist Organization of America saw the riots as an opportunity to bolster its plummeting membership; non-Zionists in the Jewish Agency saw an opportunity to "moderate" Zionist goals. Some American Jewish leaders, like the philanthropist Felix Warburg, believing that a Jewish majority in Palestine was unattainable, felt that Jewish interests in Palestine would be best served by improving economic conditions for all the inhabitants of Palestine. Judah Magnes, an American Jew who was chancellor of the Hebrew University and an ally of Warburg, called for a binational state in Palestine, thus legitimating and strengthening Jewish and non-Jewish opposition to a Jewish homeland. And so forth.

Both the British and the American governments paid close attention to the response of the general American public to the riots. In the immediate aftermath of the events there was in fact a great deal of public sympathy for the Zionist cause. But, partly as a consequence of the inadequate and uncoordinated reaction of organized Jewry, public perceptions soon changed; the Arab rioters came to be viewed as the underdogs, the Zionists as anti-democratic militarists. Palestine Jewry was depicted in the press as an artificial entity, reliant for survival on help from co-religionists abroad. Zionists soon found themselves forced to defend once again the very concept of a Jewish national home.

The history which Mrs. Cohen recounts is a depressing one. She does not exaggerate the significance of the 1929 riots or the importance of American reactions. In this period, American Jews were not as yet the acknowledged center of the Diaspora, and the riots themselves were not, in and of themselves, an irreversible turning point in the Jewish struggle for Palestine. But they did, she shows, provide a standard against which later developments could be measured. In hindsight, both the antagonism of the State Department and the muted response of American Jewry presaged reactions by both parties a decade later to British policy in Palestine and to the Nazi campaign against the Jews.

ALTHOUGH the utility of counterfactual history is generally limited, one cannot read Mrs. Cohen's book without reflecting on what might have been had American Jewry only acted differently. Of course one cannot unequivocally assert that a united and unified community would have prevailed against

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the combined opposition of the British government, the State Department, Protestant missionaries, the press, and a social atmosphere tinged with anti-Semitism. And, certainly, one cannot derive summary judgments of American Jewry's actions in the late 20's from a post-Holocaust, post-1948 perspective. All that being said, however, Mrs. Cohen is justly critical of the American Jewish community, and leaves little doubt that a more concerted effort would have ameliorated British policy to some extent, and perhaps have made it possible in later years for a certain number of Jews fleeing the Nazis to have gained refuge in Palestine.

Beyond all of this, what makes Mrs. Cohen's book much more than simply an extremely interesting historical study is the subject's continuing relevance to events in today's Middle East. For one thing, it offers a useful reminder of the deep-seated roots of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Without belaboring the analogy between the riots of 1929 and the current disturbances in what was formerly mandatory Palestine, one need simply note the continuing portrayal of Zionism as *the* obstacle to Arab self-determination in Palestine and the fact that many people—both Arab and non-Arab—continue to disparage and subvert the very notion of a Jewish state.

In the nearly six decades since the riots, much in the United States has of course changed. American society is much more open and pluralistic; anti-Semitism as a constraint upon Jewish activism has diminished. Whatever the shortcomings of today's State Department, its views on the Middle East are clearly not comparable with those held during the 1920's, 30's, and 40's. And while internal divisions and feuds among American Jews have hardly vanished, the battle for Jewish hearts and minds has been won by the Zionists.

Some things have changed less, however. The demographic arguments for a Palestinian Arab state and predictions about such a state's presumed democratic nature continue to resonate, as do assertions about the supposed demographic problems facing the Zionist state. Protestant antipathy toward Zionism persists in some quarters, albeit in a different form. A number of people, including some Jews, are prepared to sacrifice Jewish "parochial" nationalism on the altar of universal justice. And Jewish critics of Israel are still used to legitimate criticisms of Israel by others. In some respects, the position of Zionism has even regressed: the same international organization which in the late 40's helped to legitimate Zionism now works to delegitimate it. And anti-Semitism has once again found a semi-respectable cover in anti-Zionism.

With this book, therefore, Naomi Cohen has performed a notable service. Apart from its great merit as a work of historical reconstruction, *The Year After the Riots* is a hauntingly resonant reminder of the nature and the intensity of the test to which the organized American Jewish community has been repeatedly put in this century, and which it has on more than one occasion tragically failed to meet.

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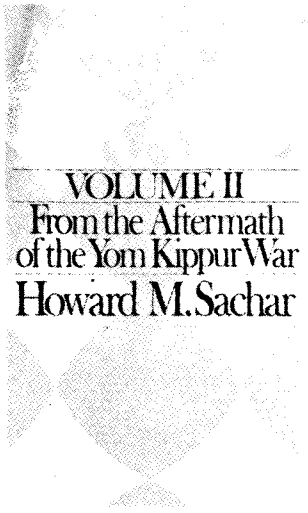

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Political Murder

ALL THE RIGHT ENEMIES: THE LIFE AND MURDER OF CARLO TRESCA. By DOROTHY GALLAGHER. *Rutgers University Press. 324 pp. $24.95*

Reviewed by STEPHEN SCHWARTZ

THIS book presents one of the most remarkable personalities in 20th-century American history: an Italian-born labor leader of anarchist convictions, a pronounced anti-Stalinist, who was assassinated in 1943 in New York, very possibly at the instance of the Communist party. The Tresca case has been discussed for decades by veterans of the 1930's dissident Left—anarchists, Lovestoneites, Trotskyites—and by a handful of historical scholars. That a book such as Dorothy Gallagher's has been published, and, although written from a leftist viewpoint, that it should be accurate in its assessment of Soviet-sponsored political terrorism in the West during the period, seems a miracle: a small and flawed one, but a miracle nonetheless.

The character of Carlo Tresca is inseparable from the labor culture of the first half of this century, with its deep idealism and spirit of self-sacrifice and its genuinely religious attachment to the redemptionist doctrines of anarchism and socialism. His background was, unsurprisingly, middle-class. What is rather more surprising is that he did not, like so many petit-bourgeois rebels of the time, turn his back on university and guild and launch himself into the revolutionary movement at a precocious age. Rather, he trained professionally as an accountant, and, had he stayed in Italy, might well have remained an obscure figure in the vastness of Italian radicalism.

Tresca came into his own once he arrived here in 1904, at the age of twenty-five, in flight from a political trial in Italy. (His brother, who preceded him here, had established a medical practice.) He was soon editing an Italian-language newspaper in Philadelphia, with the characteristic title of *Il Proletario*.

Tosca's declared enemies, in addition to the normal anarchist gallery of demons ranging from priests to bankers, included the Italian *"padrone"* who preyed on recent arrivals, extorting their meager capital in exchange for jobs, and the Italian criminal gangs, predecessors of the Mafia, who enacted similar roles as loan sharks. He soon attracted protests from Italian diplomatic officials in the United States as well as the unfriendly attentions of the federal postal service, which began barring issues of his periodicals from the mails.

By 1912 Carlo Tresca had become famous in the world of American labor and radicalism; in that year he was ushered into the full glare of national publicity by the celebrated textile workers' strike in Lawrence, Massachusetts, called by the anarchosyndicalist Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). William Haywood, the former Rocky Mountain mine organizer and spokesman for the IWW, had left Lawrence under threat of indictment. With his powerful oratorical and publicity gifts, Tresca, who came to be known as the "bull of Lawrence," rallied the strikers. The entire spectacle profoundly moved labor and liberal opinion throughout the nation.

FOR the next twenty-five years, until the middle of the 1930's, Tresca carried out a unique function as the civic conscience of the community of poorer Italian immigrants while becoming a popular figure as well in the bohemian political and literary circles that spawned individuals like John Reed, the early apologist for Lenin. His enemies continued to include the old symbols—the hypocritical priest, the parasitical gangster—but in the 1920's and 1930's he acquired two new and deadlier ones, Fascism and Communism.

Prior to his flight from Europe, Tresca had known Benito Mussolini, then a young socialist radical. After Mussolini's accession to power in 1922, Tresca, through a journal he had begun to publish in 1917 called *Il Martello* ("The Hammer"), emerged as one of the most

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STEPHEN SCHWARTZ *is a fellow at the Institute of Contemporary Studies in San Francisco and the author (with Victor Alba) of* Spanish Marxism vs. Soviet Communism: A History of the POUM *(Transaction Books).*

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effective, popular, and irritating voices of Italian anti-Fascism. In the fight against Mussolini, Tresca early on exhibited a willingness to join with Moscow-line Communists. But by the time of the Spanish Civil War of 1936-39, if not earlier, Tresca had learned that Soviet Communism represented no less a menace to the cause he championed than Fascism.

The single event that seems to have pushed Tresca into active condemnation of the Soviet Union was the murder of the Italian anarchist writer Camillo Berneri in Republican Spain in 1937. Berneri, one of the best-loved figures in the international anarchist movement, was kidnapped and killed during fighting that broke out in Barcelona between anarchists and the dissident Communist *Partit Obrer d'Unificacio Marxista* (POUM) on the one side, and Soviet-controlled police, on the other. (This fighting is best described in George Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia.)* At the time, the Stalinist purges in the USSR were at their height, and Tresca saw the murder of Berneri as an extension of the purge apparatus into the West.

Then, a year later, in 1938, a second case erupted in New York after Juliet Stuart Poyntz, a well-known Communist intellectual and probable Soviet secret-police agent, disappeared; Tresca and a small group of active anti-Stalinists charged that Poyntz was another victim of the Stalinist purge.

These affairs and the 1939 Hitler-Stalin pact drove Tresca into a fury of opposition to the Soviets and their Communist supporters around the world. But it was the entry of the U.S. into World War II, with the USSR cast as an ally in the struggle against Fascism, that set the stage for Tresca's murder. He was shot to death on January 11, 1943, at the corner of Fifth Avenue and 15th Street in Manhattan.

THERE is sufficient evidence, as thoroughly developed by Dorothy Gallagher, to believe that the actual killer was Carmine (Lilo) Galante, an associate of John Dioguardi (Johnny Dio), a notorious mobster; Galante would later rise to the heights of Mafia power before being spectacularly gunned down in a Brooklyn restaurant in 1979, thirty-six years after Tresca. From the beginning, however, there was also speculation that the killer of Carlo Tresca, while owing a primary allegiance to the Mafia, was paid or otherwise guided by Soviet, Italian, or American Communists who sought the elimination of an eloquent opponent. (At the time of his death, Tresca was preparing an issue of *Il Martello* replete with attacks on Stalinism.) Speculation similarly surrounded the figure of another Italian political activist with whom Tresca had once been acquainted, Enea Sormenti, also known as Vittorio Vidali and, during the Civil War in Spain, as "Comandante Carlos Contreras" of the Soviet-controlled Fifth Regiment of the Spanish Republican forces.

Tresca was killed just as he was organizing a major political fight to influence the United States government in its wartime dealings with Italy. The Fascist regime was in a deep crisis, an Allied invasion was clearly on the agenda, and efforts were under way to coordinate the establishment of a post-Fascist government. These last were centered, in Washington, in an entity titled the Italian-American Victory Council, set up under the authority of the Office of War Information. The Communists, vying for a leading role in postwar Italy, sought to participate in the Victory Council, but Tresca called for a close watch on these activities by the U.S. government, and he also opposed involvement in the Victory Council by representatives of a New York Italian political boss, the newspaper publisher Generoso Pope.

Galante was arrested in the case, but was released and never charged. Indeed, New York authorities never indicted anybody in the murder, and to this day it remain officially unsolved. Miss Gallagher somewhat hesitantly concludes that the crime originated with the Mafia alone. But there remain curious coincidences that point to Communist-Mafia collaboration. One, which Miss Gallagher mentions without sufficient elaboration, is that two of the most notorious and extreme Stalinists in the history of the American union movement, the

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maritime leader Frederick N. (Blackie) Myers and the warehouse organizer Louis Goldblatt, were suspiciously close to Galante on the night of the murder. Another, which she seems not to know about, is that one Albert Marinelli, a New York politician with whom Johnny Dio and Lilo Galante were associated, had also been involved in an example of clearly illegal activities by Soviet agents in the U.S., the so-called "Robinson-Rubens" case.

DOROTHY GALLAGHER'S achievements in this book are two: she has effectively recreated the atmosphere and attitudes of the Italian radical labor movement in America during the first half of this century, and she has extensively researched certain accessible but neglected subjects. Thus, she presents a useful recapitulation of known details about the life of the fearsome Vidali, including his decades-long attempt, while serving as a leading parliamentarian of the Italian Communist party, to clear himself of the Stalinist-killer label.

The drawbacks of *All the Right Enemies* consist of a number of gaps and errors—items like the death of Berneri and the Marinelli affair are left almost untouched, and Miss Gallagher is simply unfamiliar with some of the political history of the epoch—and an attitude, characteristic of many recent studies of radical movements, of moral neutrality as between Soviet Communism and "American capitalism." Miss Gallagher, for example, equates the depredations of the Soviet secret police with the paranoid fantasies of American Left-liberals about "secret teams" of criminals in league with American intelligence authorities, and she closes with a slap at those who, sharing Tresca's radical background, eventually broke completely with the Left and rallied to capitalist democracy in the face of the Communist betrayal of their ideals. Yet the truth is that such "apostates" have learned much better than today's left-wing historians the real lessons of the death of Carlo Tresca—and of millions more.

Pariah and Parvenu

TWO JEWISH JUSTICES: OUTCASTS IN THE PROMISED LAND. By ROBERT A. BURT. *University of California Press. 157 pp. $19.95.*

Reviewed by PAUL S. APPELBAUM

LOUIS D. BRANDEIS grew up in Kentucky, in the comfortable surroundings of an assimilated German-Jewish family. He carried himself as a patrician, with a personal coolness that was impervious to almost all attempts at intimacy. Felix Frankfurter, a quarter-century his junior, was born in Vienna and emigrated at the age of twelve to the United States, where he lived with his struggling parents on Manhattan's East Side. Garrulous and ingratiating to a fault, Frankfurter was once described by his wife as having "two hundred best friends." An unlikely pair, then—yet when the two men met in 1916, something clicked, and their friendship endured until Brandeis's death in 1941.

The Brandeis-Frankfurter relationship has intrigued scholars and inspired a spate of books. Despite its title, however, Robert Burt's slim volume, really an extended essay, is not another effort to explore the nature of their mutual attraction or, for that matter, to consider the propriety of the services Frankfurter performed for Brandeis while the latter sat on the U.S. Supreme Court. Nor is it really about their Jewishness, though Burt has quite a number of things to say about that. Rather, Burt, the Southmayd Professor of Law at Yale, uses the contrasts between the two men to explore the role of the judge in shaping social policy. His efforts carry him in sometimes bewildering directions, but his central thesis can be stated plainly: judicial power ought to be employed on behalf of the disenfranchised; the judge who cannot empathize with their needs lends himself to the abuse of his powers.

PAUL S. APPELBAUM *is A.F. Zeleznik Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. For the 1988-89 academic year he is visiting interdisciplinary professor at Georgetown University Law Center, Washington, D.C.*

For Burt, Brandeis was the very exemplar of a judge. A stellar graduate of Harvard Law School, he had turned down the offer of a faculty position there (had he accepted, he would have been the first Jewish professor at the nation's leading law school) to enter private practice in Boston. Though his partner and many of his clients came from New England's Yankee elite, Brandeis did not seek entry into their social world. Instead, he struck an anti-establishment posture as a progressive crusader in the courts, a self-described "people's lawyer" pursuing litigation on behalf of the working classes against employers not yet required to bargain fairly or to observe minimal levels of safety and decency. Burt argues that Brandeis deliberately maintained his status as an outsider in the Gentile world, albeit one who enjoyed some access to the bastions of high society, and used his unique position to attempt to reconcile the working and the propertied classes.

Once appointed to the Supreme Court in 1916 by Woodrow Wilson—thereby becoming the first Jew to serve on the nation's highest bench—Brandeis (according to Burt) continued his advocacy on behalf of the powerless. Though often isolated in dissent with his colleague Oliver Wendell Holmes, Brandeis resisted the prevailing dogma that led the Court to strike down legislation protecting the rights of workers and consumers on the grounds that it infringed the superior rights of property. His views were always buttressed by careful explication of the relevant factual settings, in an effort, Burt believes, to share his empathic understanding with his colleagues on the Court and the legal establishment in general.

What accounted for Brandeis's sympathy with the underclass? Burt believes it was his acceptance of his own status as an outsider, a Jew in a Christian nation. Indeed, the ease with which Brandeis played this role is what made it possible for him, somewhat belatedly, to embrace his own Jewishness in an unconflicted manner: in 1912 he joined the American Zionist Organization, hardly a common move among the nation's

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assimilationist German-Jewish elite, and two years later became chairman of its executive committee. The characteristics that made him a good judge, Burt concludes, ultimately made him a good Jew as well.

FELIX FRANKFURTER comes off less favorably in Burt's account. He too excelled at Harvard Law School and, after a stint in Washington, returned to become the school's first Jewish professor. But Burt gives short shrift to Frankfurter's accomplishments, including his role as a founder of the American Civil Liberties Union, leading opponent of the execution of the anarchists Sacco and Vanzetti, star of the Harvard Law faculty, and adviser to Franklin Roosevelt.

Rather, Burt focuses on Frankfurter's quest for acceptance by the Gentile world into which he, unlike Brandeis, married. This unattainable desire led to his mortification at the slightest social gaffe—and also, once Brandeis had passed from the scene, to his dissociation from Jewish affairs. (After Brandeis ascended to the Court, Frankfurter had carried out certain tasks the Justice could no longer perform, including representing American Zionist interests at the peace negotiations in France after World War I.)

To sharpen the distinction between the two men Burt employs a dichotomy proposed by Hannah Arendt, according to which the Jew can play the role in society either of pariah or of parvenu. Whereas Brandeis embraced willingly the role of the outcast, Frankfurter by his actions put himself in the category of the social climber. This presumed craving for social acceptance was the basis for what Burt characterizes as Frankfurter's abandonment of sympathy for the powerless following his appointment to the Supreme Court in 1939.

In Burt's view, once on the Court Frankfurter adopted an idealized majoritarian approach to the law and the role of the judge that failed to recognize the often countervailing needs of the disenfranchised, including blacks and other minority groups. And Burt argues that Frankfurter had little sympathy for his own people, either, flatly rejecting (for instance) the evidence offered him by a Polish emissary in 1942 concerning the existence of Nazi extermination camps, and refusing to use his access to Roosevelt to raise the issue. The inadequate judge was an inadequate Jew as well.

One more step is required to bring Burt's argument to a close. In modern America, he maintains, we are all outsiders, by which he means not that we are alienated from the seats of power but that contemporary society is mobile and rootless. Thus, Jews and non-Jews alike face the choice of the two Jewish Justices: accept the role of pariah or strive to be a parvenu. The former implies a consistent sympathy with the underclasses, a trait Burt also associates with an activist judiciary. The latter carries with it the need to suppress those below us on the social ladder, lest they rise to challenge our status—a trait Burt connects with the more restrained judicial posture of the later Warren and Burger Courts.

Can the making of law and social policy really be as simple as this? That is the central question raised by this book, and to answer it we must clear away the subsidiary issues, including Burt's rather questionable characterizations of American history and society and his distorted portrait of Frankfurter. Is it the role of the judge primarily to shape the law so as to promote the status of those remaining outside the strongholds of power? And should this, as Burt suggests, be pursued even at the cost of civic turmoil, on the grounds that suppressed rage at injustice may, in the long run, pose an even greater threat to the stability of government?

A society that protects the rights of all its citizens, regardless of their social status, is an ideal with which few would quarrel. Many would even second Burt's apparent belief that society is obligated to advance the well-being of those less fortunate. But it is much less clear that singleminded judicial acquiescence

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in the demands of the underprivileged is the best way to accomplish these ends. From the practical point of view alone, judicial efforts to achieve social reform that run too far ahead of or counter to public attitudes are likely to fail or to produce unanticipated side-effects: witness the flight of white students from urban schools, and of their families from city neighborhoods, following widespread court-ordered busing. The possibility that he may be fomenting violence against the very "outsiders" he means to help might also induce a prudent judge to employ discretion in pushing the limits of the majority's toleration.

But more is involved than pragmatic considerations. On the basis of principle, too, there is more to be said than Burt allows for a Frankfurter-like adherence to majoritarian principles except in cases of egregious infringement of minority rights. Within the realm of valid political choice, especially where the distribution of resources is involved, the wishes of the majority, manifested by their representatives, ought properly to take precedence over the predilections of their judges. Burt's ideal judge is, in another perspective, a potential usurper of the prerogatives of the majority; why then should he warrant our respect?

In a concluding image, Burt portrays Brandeis as in the line of the biblical Prophets, "prepared to risk social order because they give highest value to individual choice." Frankfurter, in contrast, is said to embody the characteristics of the ancient priest, "relying on ritual and demanding popular deference." Whatever accuracy there may be in this notion of what the Prophets themselves stood for—actually, very little—one is entitled to believe that latter-day exemplars of this spirit have no place on the bench, especially if the creed they preach is conducive to social disorder. Priests, respectful of society's traditions and institutions, cautious in demanding change, but clinging to a law that rejects injustice, may in fact offer a better model for our judiciary.

Mr. Right

GOLDWATER. By BARRY GOLDWATER with JACK CASSERLY. *Doubleday. 432 pp. $21.95.*

Reviewed by JAMES NUECHTERLEIN

In 1964 Barry Goldwater ran for President as a conservative activist and lost by the largest popular margin in history to that date. Sixteen years later Ronald Reagan, also a conservative activist—he had in fact first come to national political attention during the Goldwater campaign—won a resounding victory, one he easily repeated in 1984. Those discrepant results describe the arc of recent American political history, and to make sense of them is to go a long way toward making sense of the contemporary political scene. What happened and why cannot be understood simply—or even essentially—in biographical terms, but biography is part of the equation, and so these memoirs by Barry Goldwater, highly uneven in themselves, make a claim on our attention.

Potential readers who note that these reminiscences have been composed "with Jack Casserly" need not worry that they will encounter in these pages anything less than the authentic voice of the subject himself. Here is Goldwater unadorned: feisty, cantankerous, impulsive, contradictory, priding himself above all on his unvarnished honesty and independence. When he tells us in the preface that he has recorded much of these memoirs on tape we have no reason to doubt him. Sometimes, indeed, those tapes seem not to have been edited all that closely before being translated to print. Neither the recollections nor the arguments are entirely consecutive. Goldwater offers judgments and appraisals with scattershot insouciance, and his memory is a verbal field of fire that imperils all—friend or foe, Republican or Democrat, conservative or liberal—who stumble onto it. (He does, though, reserve his most venomous shots for ideological opponents: he dismisses Jane Fonda as a "political whore," exhausts the synonyms for *dishonest* and *unprincipled* in discussing Lyndon Johnson, and reports of the presence of Bill Moyers on television, "Every time I see him, I get sick to my stomach and want to throw up.")

There is a certain charm in Goldwater's curmudgeonly posture—especially since it appears to trace more to impetuousness than to actual nastiness—but at times it is so exaggerated as to weaken the book's impact by trivializing its argument. The first chapter, for example, bewails the decline and fall of Congress over the years of Goldwater's presence in it in such overdrawn terms that most readers will dismiss it out of hand. We may be willing to concede (or at least consider) that a Senate dominated by men like Richard Russell and Robert Taft possessed more elegance and statesmanship than obtains today, but when Goldwater argues flatly that Senators in those days concerned themselves unselfishly with the national good (in presumed contrast to today's self-regarding preoccupation with reelection), he has wandered from history into mythology. There is a lot wrong with Congress these days, and Goldwater's random accusations touch on some of the problems, but he does not sustain an argument. This is an abiding weakness in Goldwater: reading these memoirs, one is regularly reminded of Lionel Trilling's dismissal of postwar conservatism as less a philosophy than a series of irritable mental gestures.

But that is not all there is to say either about Barry Goldwater or about this book. Goldwater the man is far more compelling and attractive than Goldwater the political thinker, and he writes of himself, his family, and his friends with considerable warmth and honesty. He tells movingly of his devotion to his wife, Peggy, and of the guilt he feels at having let politics and his many hobbies (he has been throughout his life an inveterate tinkerer) get in the way at times of the natural closeness of their relationship; his grief over her death in 1985 is deeply felt and sensitively recorded. He also records frankly his loving but occa-

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sionally troubled and distant relations with his four children. In the personal aspects of these memoirs Goldwater can be as unsparing of himself as in the political aspects he is harsh with others, but he does not wallow in indulgent self-incrimination or apologize for being the man he has been. He simply records, with unselfconscious candor, and leaves the judgments to others and to God. (Goldwater reveals throughout this book, without undue exhibition, deep Christian faith.)

BUT it is not for his personal life that Goldwater is worthy of note. It is, rather, for his central role in the conservative revival of the postwar years. Here the memoirs are of great interest, for Goldwater provides considerable detail on his rise from the Phoenix City Council in 1949 to the United States Senate in 1952 to the climactic presidential campaign of 1964.

The odd thing is that Goldwater was in many ways an unlikely politician, a matter his wife understood better than he did and which she tried unsuccessfully at various points in his career to impress upon him. There was some question in Goldwater's youth (he was born in 1909) whether he showed promise for much of anything. He got in enough trouble as a teenager that part way through high school his father banished him from the family home in Phoenix to the Staunton Military Academy in Virginia. (Goldwater was very close to his mother, but his relations with his father, he makes clear, were strained, distant, and cool.)

At Staunton, despite some continuing disciplinary problems, Goldwater flourished; in his senior year he won the outstanding cadet award and received the offer of an appointment to West Point. But his father was ill, his mother wanted him back home, and to his lifelong regret—he believes he would have been a better military officer than a politician—he enrolled instead at the University of Arizona. His father soon died of a heart attack, and as the eldest of three children, Goldwater felt it his duty to leave college after just one year ("the biggest mistake of my life") and begin an apprenticeship in the family department-store business.

Goldwater was a highly successful businessman and soon became a major figure in city and statewide civic ventures. By the end of World War II—in which he served flying military supplies and training young pilots for combat—the energetic, popular, restless Goldwater began to look for opportunities and challenges beyond the world of merchandising. He got involved in efforts to clean up Phoenix's notably corrupt city government and in 1949 won election to the nonpartisan city council. A year later he served as campaign manager for Republican Howard Pyle's upset victory in the race for Governor (Arizona at the time was an overwhelmingly Democratic state) and in 1952, riding Dwight Eisenhower's coattails, Goldwater narrowly defeated Ernest McFarland, who had been Democratic majority leader in the Senate.

Within a few years, Goldwater became a major spokesman for the right wing of the Republican party. Although he had for political reasons supported Eisenhower in the 1952 presidential primary struggles, Goldwater was always at heart a Taft Republican. He had learned his conservative Republican principles from his mother, and he never gave those principles a moment's doubt. It was the intensity of Goldwater's dedication to conservative ideals that set him apart from other young Republican politicians and made him a leader of the conservative movement. As he puts it, "Conservatism was more than a cause. It was my creed, my life."

What was the conservative movement? Put simply, it was everything the New Deal was not. It refused to acquiesce in the uneasy accommodation moderate Republicans had made with government regulation, Keynesian economics, and the welfare state. It wanted to reverse the Roosevelt revolution, not come to terms with it. The counterrevolutionary Right came quickly to understand that ultimate political victory could only follow upon prior success in transforming the Republican party into a vehicle of its ambitions. The moderates and "me-tooers" would have to go

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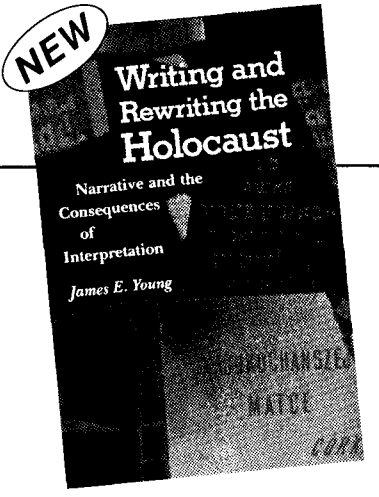

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first, then the liberals and Democrats. For Goldwater and his friends, the Eastern Republican establishment that had dominated the party since the 1940's was but a "pale imitation" of the Democrats, and by the late 1950's Goldwater—for all his personal respect for Ike—was dismissing the Eastern-dominated Eisenhower administration as a "dime-store New Deal." The conservatives sensed the need to move the GOP geographically to the West and South in order to move it ideologically to the Right.

By 1960 Goldwater had become the acknowledged leader of the conservative movement, and in 1964, after a brutal primary struggle (on both sides) that tore the party apart, the conservatives obtained control of the Republican apparatus and gained the nomination for their spokesman. It was, in the short run at least, a notably Pyrrhic victory. It is virtually certain that no Republican could have defeated Lyndon Johnson in 1964, but the bitter internal Republican divisions, along with Goldwater's perceived extremism, guaranteed a Democratic landslide.

Goldwater says he knew it was going to happen but decided to run anyway. He had looked forward to running against John Kennedy: that race, in his view, would have offered a clear-cut contest of political principles between two men who, for all their ideological differences, liked and respected each other. After Kennedy's assassination, Goldwater's first instinct was to withdraw from consideration. He sensed that no Republican could win (the country, he thought, would not want three different Presidents within a year). Beyond that, he found the prospect of running against Lyndon Johnson "abhorrent." Johnson, for whom Goldwater felt only "personal and political contempt," represented everything in politics that Goldwater found alien: he was, as Goldwater saw him, a plotter, a manipulator, a master of the political deal. He would not run on principles; he would fudge the issues; he would fight dirty. Goldwater had dreamed of a campaign focused on principles and beliefs, but Johnson "never believed in either. His only political dogma was expediency. Things were never right or wrong."

One senses, in the extraordinary vehemence of Goldwater's denunciation of Johnson, something more than personal animosity. Johnson approached politics the way most American politicians do: as an arena of compromise, moderation, and trade-offs. But Barry Goldwater was never, in that sense, a political animal. For him politics was a struggle between contending principles and causes, compromise of which on either side represented not necessary accommodation with reality but moral inadequacy. He wanted things reduced to first principles; Johnson wanted to get things done. It was not just political issues or personal style that separated the two men, it was a conflict of visions as to the very nature of politics. (Given Goldwater's repeated affirmation of the politics of moral principle, it is curious that he should be so outspoken in his attacks on the religious Right, which he at several points condemns for its insistence on clear and unyielding standards of right and wrong. This is by no means the only issue on which Goldwater stumbles into internal contradiction.)

In the end, despite his reservations—including those concerning his own qualifications for the presidency—and his anticipation of defeat, Goldwater decided he had no choice but to run. He could not at that late date desert the conservative cause that had made him its symbol, and he knew that it was essential for him to lead the struggle for control of the GOP. He had concluded, as he indicated privately to Peggy, that "we'd lose the election but win the party."

And so things turned out. At first, though, it appeared that in losing the election as badly as they had, the Goldwater forces had lost the party as well. Richard Nixon's comeback in 1968 depended in no small part on the discrediting of the far Right after 1964. Nixon was a conservative, but never a movement conservative, and it is easy to forget the essential distrust with which the right wing of the party regarded him, especially after his move to the political center over the course of his first term.

Today conservatives like to regard the Goldwater movement as the first stage in an inexorable process by which they first gained ascendancy among the Republicans and eventually, climaxing in the Reagan presidency, in the nation. But that is too neat a story. It may well be the case that the Republican Right would have remained what it appeared to be after November 1964—a failed footnote to history—had not the Democratic Left rapidly descended into its own internecine conflict and ultimate ideological chaos and political disaster. A botched Great Society, a civil-rights movement reduced to urban horror, a disastrous Vietnam, and then, after the reprieve of Watergate, economic stagflation, foreign-policy irresolution, and ideological malaise: it is probably more to these things, and to the luminous personality of Ronald Reagan, that we should look for the revival of conservative fortunes in our time than to an irresistible historical evolution begun in the Goldwater movement.

Be that as it may, Goldwater's career after 1964 was essentially anti-climactic. He returned to the Senate in 1968 and stayed there for three terms until his retirement in 1986. He remained highly visible in public life, and he peppers the later chapters of his memoirs with reflections (usually acerbic) on Vietnam, Nixon and Watergate, the CIA and national security, and the resistance of his beloved armed forces to his eventually successful efforts at military reorganization.

Now, retired and in ill health, he has gone back home to Phoenix, where, unrevised and unrepentant, he shows occasional signs of mellowing but remains essentially ungentled. In a brief epilogue, he tells with evident pride of receiving an award from West Point for exemplifying personal devotion to the ideals enshrined in the Academy's motto, "Duty, Honor, Country." Whatever his faults, no one—not his worst enemy—would deny that Barry Goldwater deserved that award.

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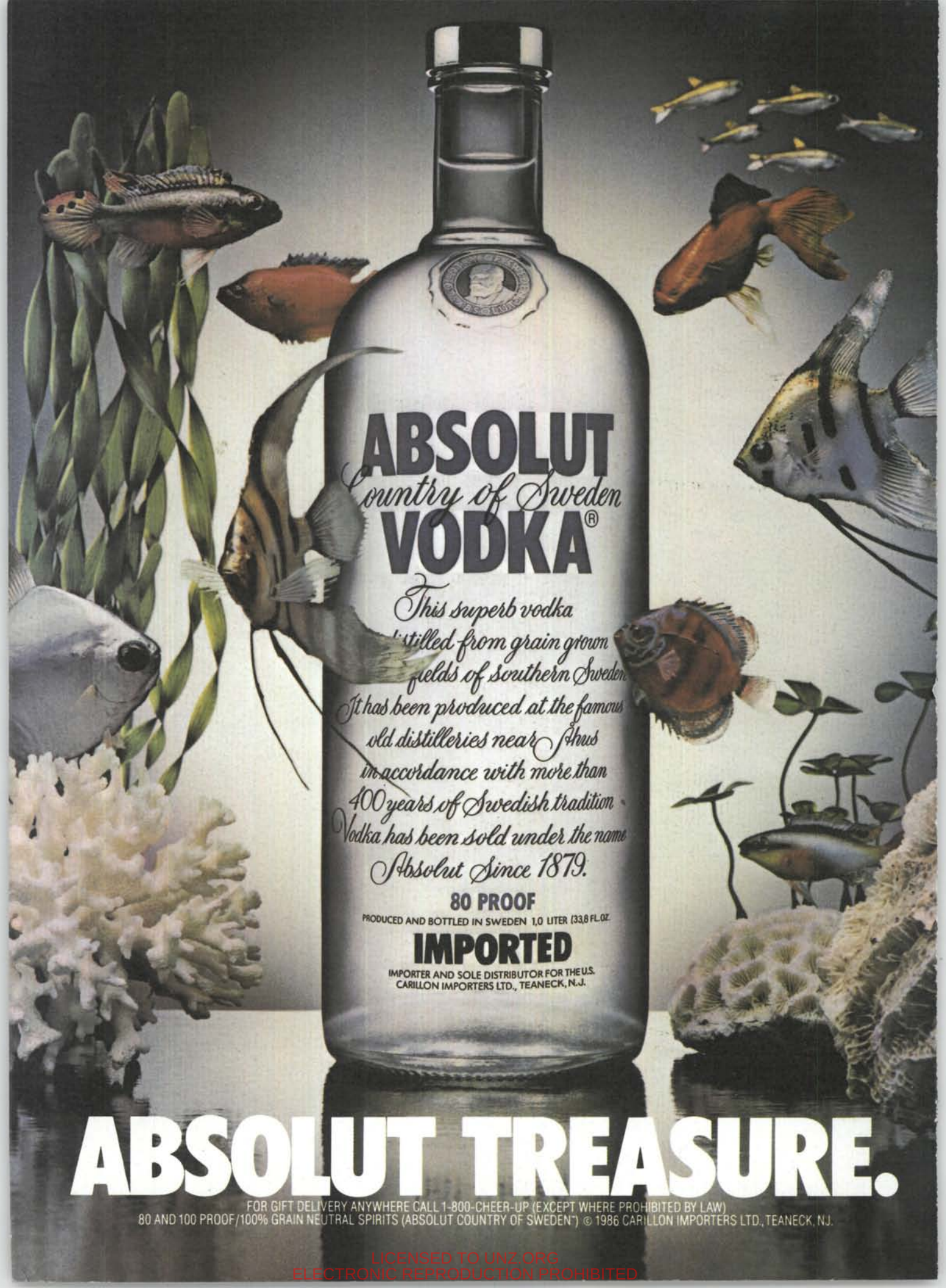
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